THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

VERSIONS OF THE MORTE DARTHUR: ENGLISH TRANSLATION AND PRINTING IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

by

© Barbara Belyea

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR

THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1976

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled VERSIONS OF THE MORTE DARTHUR: ENGLISH TRANSLATION AND PRINTING IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY, submitted by Barbara Belyea in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

E. D. Blyth
Supervisor

Jo Ann Croone

John D. Crowley

Mitchell V. Jones

Roy Arthur Swanson
External Examiner

Date September 1, 1976

IN MEMORY OF MY FATHER

AND OF J. ALFRED LEONARD

ABSTRACT

At the end of the fifteenth century, William Caxton established the first printing press in England and published a number of chivalric romances, among them Sir Thomas Malory's Morte Darthur. Just as this romance literature was translated from French into English for a public eager to imitate the courtly culture of France and Burgundy, so it became translated from a manuscript convention to one of printed editions.

The English literary tradition, dating from the courtly poetry of Chaucer and Gower, owed its artistic forms and conventions, as well as its syntax and sense of style, to French literary models. If translation may be viewed not as the reproduction of an original text, but as, at best, an approximate transference of interpreted meaning from one set of idioms and cultural assumptions to another, then the development of English literature that began in the fourteenth century may be considered as the successful translation into English of an earlier French tradition.

Printing increased romance readership; at the same time, it imposed brevity and textual exactitude on what had been a fluid and expansive genre. These constraints reinforced, however, certain tendencies already evident in romance redactions of the late medieval period --tendencies towards narrative abbreviation and greater structural simplicity.

Caxton's and later editions of the Morte Darthur illustrate forces at work within the romance tradition and on the development of li-

terature in general. They exist in a relationship with Malory's compilation that is similar to that of Malory's own manuscript with the "Frensshe books" that were his sources. Malory adapted the French Vulgate romances and earlier English translations to form a commentary on the state of England in his own time. Similarly, the successive editors of the Morte Darthur have adapted and explained the work to their contemporaries. Viewed in this light, the Morte Darthur represents a tradition that includes translation, in terms of both language and form, as an essential element of literary creation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank Dr. E. D. Blodgett, Professor M. V. Dimic, and Dr. Joan Crowther, for all of their advice, patience and encouragement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION.	1
II.	THE PROCESS OF TRANSLATION.	7
III.	CAXTON'S READING PUBLIC.	25
IV.	ENGLISH ADAPTATION OF THE FRENCH CULTURAL TRADITION. .	39
V.	LATE MEDIEVAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION.	54
VI.	MALORY'S TRANSLATION OF THE FRENCH ARTHURIAD.	74
VII.	MALORY'S ADAPTATION OF THE FRENCH ARTHURIAD.	95
VIII.	COMPILATION AND THE QUESTION OF UNITY.	110
IX.	EDITIONS OF THE MORTE DARTHUR.	131

* * * * * * *

BIBLIOGRAPHY. 144

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

When F. J. Furnivall, founding editor of the Early English Text Society, discovered a new Caxton edition, he excitedly "drank seven cups of tea and eat five or six large slices of bread and butter in honour of the event."[1] Walter Oakeshott felt a similar excitement on finding the Winchester manuscript copy of Malory's Morte Darthur in 1934, after all hope had been abandoned for such a discovery.[2]

New evidence necessitates a complete reappraisal of all preceding contributions to the area in question. T. S. Eliot affirmed this principle as it applies to the creation of new works of art: "What happens when a new work of art is created is something that happens simultaneously to all works which preceded it."[3] The same principle applies to new textual discoveries and changing critical attitudes. Eugène Vinaver, who has devoted his scholarly effort to a study of Malory, was not slow to point out its application to Oakeshott's discovery.

> The fact that the study of Malory depended so completely on Caxton and his 'simple cunning' was a serious obstacle to an accurate understanding of the work. Caxton like most early printers was not merely careless; he was dangerously full of initiative and he had the unwelcome habit of silently editing his texts....We could not separate Malory from his printer. (4)

By basing his 1947 edition of the Morte Darthur on the Winchester MS, Vinaver tried to bypass four and a half centuries of editorial adaptation of this book, beginning with Caxton's printing of 1485.[5] Oakeshott's discovery permitted Vinaver to substitute the manuscript text for that of Caxton's edition as the basis of a more "accurate" modern edi-

tion.

> ...while the manuscript was not that used by Caxton, it was in many respects more complete and authentic than Caxton's edition....The most obvious merit of this text [the Winchester MS] is that it brings us nearer to what Malory really wrote. (6)

Vinaver chose the Winchester MS over Caxton's text for two reasons: firstly, from a literary point of view, for its integrity, and secondly, from a historical point of view, for its closer resemblance to Malory's "original" version.

> ...it enables us to see Malory's work in the making--not as a single book such as Caxton produced under the spurious and totally unrepresentative title of Le Morte Darthur, but as a series of separate romances, each representing a distinct stage in the author's development...we become aware that his methods bear a close relation to the processes operating in the whole field of early fiction. (7)

Vinaver's intention was thus to directly confront the text that most resembled Malory's own, and to trace, by means of a comparison with probable and confirmed sources, Malory's creative development.

The discovery of the Winchester MS naturally suggested this approach and Vinaver brought to the task a comprehensive knowledge of French romances from which Malory had drawn his material.[8] Few other editors and critics could have done this work of verification and commentary so rapidly, skilfully or carefully. More recent critical studies of Malory's development as a writer, edited by R. M. Lumiansky, only serve to emphasize, by contrast, Vinaver's special aptitude and judgment.[9] Nevertheless, Vinaver has underestimated the value and vitality of the traditional view of Malory that is represented in Caxton's and successive editions of the Morte Darthur.

In accordance with Vinaver's view of Malory's method of composition, the 1947 edition was renamed the Works of Sir Thomas Malory. The intro-

duction, and the textual disposition of these Works gives Caxton's edition fairly short shrift; the history of the editions of the Morte Darthur from the sixteenth century to tbe present is subordinated to a concern for "the writer's progress'.[10] Yet Caxton's edition and those which followed it had influenced, in their adapted and reorganized forms, the English literary imagination for hundreds of years.

Moreover, in stressing Malory's method of composition as one would write of a modern author such as Balzac or Joyce, Vinaver supposed that the "obvious merit" of the Winchester MS resembled that of a definitive, copyrighted text. Whereas, in actual fact, the Winchester MS was one version, an English version, of a romance cycle that had evolved by means of alteration, expansion and abbreviation for centuries before Malory rendered it into English, and that continued to evolve, albeit at a much slower rate, even after printing had "fixed" its versions in the form of exactly reproduced copies of each edition. The traditional Morte Darthur represents the characteristic literary processes of both the medieval and post-medieval periods, divided as they are by the introduction of printing.

By disparaging Caxton's edition, Vinaver apparently neglected to recognize that Caxton was as authentically medieval in his literary tastes as Malory himself, and that his participation in "the processes operating in the...field of early fiction" marked a continual development of these rather than an abrupt change. Most early fiction, including the majority of Caxton's romance publications, consisted of translations of earlier French works. The fundamental reorientation prompted by the introduction of printing was felt, in so far as titles are concerned, only during the course of the following century. Caxton's contemporary influence was

felt more in the area of distribution: of necessity, his press appealed to a reading public that was more numerous and more socially diversified than the small courtly audiences for which manuscripts had been copied and circulated. Caxton's romances and Malory's Morte Darthur are the enduring examples of the transition from medieval to post-medieval bibliographical conventions, a process which was as natural and gradual as the adoption of French literary idioms into late medieval English.

One aim of this thesis is to demonstrate that the vernacular romance tradition of the late fifteenth century and the new medium of printing together reflected a process of social and literary development, in which both Caxton and Malory played a part. Printing increased romance readership; at the same time, it imposed brevity and textual exactitude on what had traditionally been a fluid and expansive genre. However, romance redactions of the late medieval period were already revealing a tendency towards narrative abbreviation and greater formal simplicity. The interrelationships between manuscript and printed literature, and between the courtly and urban classes of which the contemporary reading public was composed will be explored with reference to the compilation and publication of Caxton's romance translations and the Morte Darthur.

Another aim of this thesis is to describe the extent to which the English literary tradition, which had its origin in the courtly poetry of Chaucer and Gower, owed its artistic forms and conventions, as well as its syntax and sense of style, to French literary models. If translation is seen to be not an exact reproduction of an original text, but at best an approximate transference of meaning from one set of idioms to another, then the independent development of English literature that began in the fourteenth century may be considered as the successful trans-

lation into English literary idiom of an earlier and more sophisticated French tradition.

The two aims are related in so far as the notion of translation can be extended from linguistic transference and adaptation to bibliographical transition--translation not only from French to English, but also from manuscript copying to reproduction by the printing press. Within this definition, Caxton's and later editions of the Morte Darthur are versions of Malory's compilation, existing in a relationship similar to that of Malory's own manuscript with the "Frensshe books" that were his sources. And just as Malory adapted his French sources to form a commentary on the state of English society in his own time, so the successive editors of the Morte Darthur have adapted and explained the work to the audiences of their times, even while they protest their fidelity to an earlier source or authoritative text.

We may begin by considering the process of translation, as its possibilities have been explored, from the medieval standard set by St. Jerome to present linguistic theory. Then we shall be in a position to examine in detail the social and literary context of the Morte Darthur's translation from French to English, from manuscript to printed book.

NOTES

1. Caxton, Book of Curtesye, ed. F. J. Furnivall, EETS(ES) 3 (London: Oxford University Press, 1868), p. v.

2. W. J. Oakeshott, "A Malory MS", The Times (25 August, 1934), p. 11, and "The Finding of the Manuscript", in Essays on Malory, ed. J. A. W. Bennett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), pp. 1-6.

3. T. S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent", in The Sacred Wood: essays on poetry and criticism, seventh ed. (1920: London: Methuen, 1947), p. 47.

4. Eugène Vinaver, "Malory's Morte Darthur in the Light of a Recent Discovery", John Rylands Library Bulletin XIX (1935), 438-439.

5. The Works of Sir Thomas Malory, ed. Eugène Vinaver, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947). Subsequent reference will be made to the revised edition, which appeared in 1967.

6. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, p. viii; cf. p. c.

7. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, p. viii.

8. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. x,lvii-xcix. Cf. Vinaver's earlier studies: Le Roman de Tristan dans l'oeuvre de Thomas Malory (Paris: Champion, 1925), and Malory (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929).

9. Malory's Originality: critical studies of the Morte Darthur, ed. R. M. Lumiansky (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964). For more scholarly consideration of Vinaver's edition, see the Essays on Malory, ed. Bennett, particularly C. S. Lewis, "The English Prose Morte", pp. 7-28.

10. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. xxxv-lvi.

CHAPTER II: THE PROCESS OF TRANSLATION

As translators, Caxton and Malory were interpreters, to a recently enlarged English reading public, of the dominant French cultural and literary tradition. To understand the significance of their contribution to English culture of the late fifteenth century, we shall need first to consider the process of translation itself--the problems facing the translator, and the relation of translation to contemporary composition in English--and thus we shall be led to consider in a more detailed study the themes and conventions that shaped later medieval romance and particularly the Morte Darthur.

In his prologue to the Eneydos, Caxton records that, once he had decided to translate this account of the Troy story into English, "[I] forthwyth toke a penne & ynke and wrote a leef or tweyne/ whych I oversawe agayn to correcte it." But he was so influenced by "the fayr & straunge termes therin" that his translation was criticized by some readers who did not like his "ouer curyous termes whiche coude not be vnderstande of comyn peple". Yet other readers wished his language to be even more ornate and more directly imitative of his source, "and thus bytwene playn rude/ & curyous I stande abasshed...Therfor in a meane bytwene bothe I haue reduced & translated this sayd booke into our englysshe..."[1]

Theoretical discussion of the process of translation attempts to formulate in general terms the alternatives which Caxton mentions in his prologue to the Eneydos, and which face any translator of any given text. These problems can present varying degrees of difficulty in their solu-

tion, depending on the languages and cultural contexts involved, the relative stages of development of the source- and receptor-languages, and the complexity of the particular text under consideration.[2]

The choices which face the translator may be posed in the form of the following three questions. Firstly, is the translation to be faithful to the original text, and if so, "faithful" in what sense and to what degree? Secondly, is the translation to satisfy certain expectations of the audience for which the translator is preparing his text? And thirdly, is the translation to bear the mark of the translator's own style; is it to be a literary creation in its own right? To formulate these problems in one big question: can the translation be at once faithful to the original text, acceptable to its new audience, and independent as a new work of art?

It is evident that the translator is drawn simultaneously in several directions: in one sense, towards the text, to what it represented in its own time and context, and to what it has signified since as part of an inherited cultural tradition; in another sense, towards his contemporaries, to their conceptions of theme and style, the assumptions that predominate in his own time; and in a third sense, towards his own participation in the work, which may range from literal transference, to interpretation, and even to transformation of the original text.

The theory of translation found early expression in discussions of rhetoric. The "nec verbum verbo curabis reddere, fidus interpres" of Horace, and Cicero's concept of "weighing" found in his De optimo genere oratorum, have been repeated down to the present. The most important classical statement of theory is that of St. Jerome. In his fifty-seventh letter, entitled De optimo genere interpretandi, he echoes both Horace and

Cicero, but adds to their prestige his own authority as a Christian Father and as a translator of the Bible.

> Ego enim non solum fateor, sed libera voce profiteor, me in interpretatione Graecorum, absque Scripturis Sanctis, ubi verborum ordo mysterium est, non verbo e verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu...In quibus non verbum pro verbo necesse habui reddere, sed genus omne verborum vimque servari: non enim ea me annumerari lectori putavi opportere, sed tamquam appendere. (3)

However, in spite of the fact that Jerome's authority was invoked and his recommendations echoed by almost every medieval translator, his example and advice were cited, often as not, with little understanding or practical application.

One exception to this rule was King Alfred, who both appreciated and followed Jerome's principle. Even so, the wording of his preface to Gregory's Cura pastoralis indicates the formula that was to prove disastrous in the hands of translators with less judgment and less command of their own language than Alfred had. He tells how he translated

> ...hwilum word be worde, hwilum andgit of andgiete, swae swae ic hie geliornode...Siþþan ic hie a geliornod haefde, swae swae ic hic forstod, & swae ic hie andgitfullicost areccean meahte, ic hie on Englisc awende...(4)

That is, he intended to translate word for word except for passages which made no sense if literally translated; in these cases, he would express the meaning by nearly equivalent English patterns.

The prejudice in favour of literal translation wherever possible was due in some measure to a feeling that Latin was a more authoritative and prestigious medium of expression than the vernaculars, and that Latin scripture retained the "mysterium" of Hebrew and Greek scripture--a notion in direct opposition, obviously, to the spirit in which Jerome had compiled the Vulgate. Aelfric betrays this feeling in the preface to his Homilies.

> Nec tamen plura [passiones sanctorum] promitto me scripturum hac lingua, quia nec convenit huic sermocinationi plura inseri, ne forte despectui habeantur margarite Christi. (5)

By the fourteenth century, Wyclif's movement, and with it Purvey's Bible translation were important steps in putting down this idea of Latin mystery.[6]

But the preference for literal translation persisted throughout the medieval period, until it was finally replaced by humanist principles. The medieval theory was to some extent reinforced by the practice of intercalated texts; the supplementary glosses accompanying these made up for possible misunderstandings due to a too literal rendering. Fourteenth- and fifteenth-century translators continued to emphasize the faithfulness of their versions, following Jerome's principle, whether or not they actually made literal translations. The principle itself was often confused and garbled. Lydgate, for example, claimed that

> I wyl translate hyt sothly as I kan
> After the lettre, in ordre effectuelly;
> Though I not folwe the wordes by & by
> I schal not faille teuching the substance. (7)

Caxton was no exception; he began his translation of the History of Jason by stating that

> I entende to translate the sayd boke of thistories of Iason folowyng myn auctor as nygh as I can or may not chaunging the sentence, ne/ presumyng to adde ne mynusshe ony thing otherwyse than myne autor hath made in Frensshe. (8)

In Caxton's preface, Saint Jerome's distinction between "verbum" and "sensum" ("sentence") has blurred, and the "substance" that Lydgate says he will not fail to convey becomes an issue only when the language cannot translate "sothly...after the lettre".

On the other hand, the aridity of the medieval formula, together with the broad application of the concept of translation, led to a simultaneous practice of literal translation and what can be described as

adaptive translation. During the medieval period, translation could mean any version from a slavish copy to what we would call now an original work influenced or inspired by an earlier work in another language. Chaucer, for instance, did not distinguish between his translation of the Roman de la rose and his adaptation of Boccaccio's Filostrato as Troilus and Criseyde. Gower freely adapted the motifs of Guillaume's Roman de la rose in his Confessio amantis. And although Malory's explicits, which appear at various points in the Morte Darthur, state that his tales were "drawyn oute of Frenshe", that is, translated, most of Malory's present-day critics judge the Morte to be an original work.[9] It is evident that a flexible definition of translation, together with an absence of theory actually relevant to contemporary practice, led to a different conception during the Middle Ages of literary originality from that which modern criticism claims.

With the advent of the humanists' attention to style and textual integrity, the theory of translation was formulated more precisely. Both word-for-word versions and free renderings were rejected in favour of translation which was attentive to the stylistic idiom and the textual limits of the original work. "Je me suis voulu resserrer," wrote a French translator of the sixteenth century, "autant qu'il m'a esté possible, pour représenter le style de ces auteurs."[10] With a newly sophisticated awareness of the text to be translated, together with a new respect for its limits and integrity, realization grew of the responsibilities and difficulties of translation, and of the need for a clearer understanding of the process. These new attitudes arose not a little as a result of the introduction of the printing press in Europe: the press could, for the first time, guarantee identical copies and is-

sue editions of given works.[11]

The late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries were a period of a high proportion of translation in the total literary output of the emerging European nations. Translation was found to be a useful means of establishing a new literary context for these post-medieval societies, and of extending, by the syntactical and stylistic imitation of classical models, the possibilities of expression of the various vernacular receptor-languages. In England, this movement was preceded by translation and imitation of French vernacular models which already reflected the influence of Latin vocabulary and constructions.[12] The humanist emphasis on style, although it discouraged the practice of adaptive as well as word-for-word versions in the medieval tradition, led to the perfection of the art of translation in practice as well as to its clarification in theory.

Humanist principles of translation were formulated in a little essay of twelve hundred words, written in 1540 by Etienne Dolet, one of the early translators of the classics into French. Dolet's Manière de bien traduire is the most important statement of the theory of translation since St. Jerome, and in practice, although not on an epistemological level, it has not been surpassed. Dolet's principles are resumed in the following five points.

1. The translator must have a complete understanding of the argument and the manner of presentation of the author that he is translating.

> ...que le traducteur entende parfaictement le sens, & matiere de l'autheur, qu'il traduict: car par ceste intelligence, il ne sera iamais obscur en sa traduction...

2. The translator must be fluent in both the source-language and

the receptor-language.

> ...que le traducteur ait parfaicte cognoissance de la langue de l'autheur, qu'il traduict: & soit pareillement excellent en la langue, en laquelle il se mect a traduire. Par ainsi il ne violera, & n'amoindrira la maiesté de l'une, & l'aultre langue.

3. The translator must not give simply a word-for-word transcription of the original text, but rather a structure of phrases that is proper to the receptor-language yet accurately reflects the thought of the original text.

> ...il ne fault pas...que lon rende mot pour mot...cela luy procede de pauvreté, & deffault d'esprit...par laquelle erreur [on deprave] souvent le sens de l'autheur...et [n'exprime] la grace, & parfection de l'une & l'aultre langue... [ce] qui ne demonstre aultre chose, que l'ignorance du traducteur.

4. The translator must not carry over too many words from his source, and should avoid archaic and curious diction.

> ...il te fault garder d'usurper mots trop approchants du Latin, & peu usités par le passé: mais contente toy du commun, sans innover aulcunes dictions follement, & par curiosité reprehensible...le meilleur est de suivre le commun langage.

5. The translator must produce a version which is stylistically worthy of its original.

> ...sans l'observation des nombres on ne peult estre esmerveillable en quelque composition que ce soit: & sans yceulx les sentences ne peuvent estre graves & avoir leur poix requis et legitime. (13)

In contrast to the vague and incidental comments of medieval translators, and even the rather enigmatic formula of St. Jerome, the sixteenth-century humanist translators produced a theory, formulated by Dolet, and a method, exemplified by Amyot, North and Udall, which plainly faced the problems and provided the guidelines for the translation process. In his five points, Dolet provided answers to all three of the questions raised at the beginning of this chapter.

Firstly, Dolet insisted that the translation was to be faithful to the sense of the original, thus restating Jerome's principle. The translation must not be literal, but should instead express the meaning ("sens") of the original, taking into account its stylistic character. Thus Dolet demanded a balance between thought and expression, between "content" or "theme" and form.

Secondly, Dolet considered(in his second and fourth points) the audience of the translated work. He recognized the translator's need to be fluent in the receptor-language in order to convey "les proprietés, translations en diction, locution, subtilités et vehemences" of the work in question. He also insisted on the need to naturalize the original text through the use of the "commun langage", rather than adhering too closely to the source at the expense of the audience for which the translation is being written. Together with Dolet's requirement of fidelity to the author's conception in the original, this encouragement of contemporary idiom created a balance between the demands of the text and those of the translator's public.

Lastly, Dolet was not slow to stress the importance of a translation which is itself valuable as a work of literature. By means of a version which is stylistically worthy of its source, the old work enters the receptor-language as literature which reflects not only the original, but also the translator's interpretation. The original work thus takes on the resonance of a second tradition as well as its own.

In the four centuries which separate us from Dolet, theoretical commentary on translation has accumulated, reflecting successive world views and literary fashions. Yet the basic principles of the translator's art have not changed markedly for us since the humanist "revolu-

tion" of critical concepts for which Dolet is an exponent, although they have certainly been extended, in response to nineteenth-century philosophy and current linguistic theory. The Renaissance promoted and perfected translation as an art--but as a secondary art, in which the translator's skill and imagination are subordinated to and defined by the qualities of his original text. The humanist translators' success depended on the delicate harmony of forces that characterized Renaissance culture in general. When these forces inevitably split apart and hardened into less compromising movements, Dolet's ideal seemed once more impossible to realize.

One impulse for translating enthusiasm during the Renaissance was the optimistic expectation that classical culture could be absorbed into and "nationalized" by the new European cultures. To some extent, this hope was realized. In 1626, Nicolas Faret praised Amyot as one of the first translators to reshape the French language according to Latin models.

> Cet ouvrage [Plutarque] a esté le premier par qui l'on a commencé de connoistre que nostre langue pourroit un jour acquerir assez de force et de beauté, pour atteindre à l'excellence de la Greque et de la Latine. (14)

By contrast, Sir Philip Sidney recognized that the structure of English could not be made to conform so exactly as French to classical syntax and rules of prosody, and argued that English had certain advantages peculiar to itself as a "poeticall" language.[15] The English turned their unclassical language to translation even so, in a spirit best expressed by Philemon Holland, who accused those scholars opposing translation that

> ...[they] think not honorably of their native countrey and mother tongue as they ought: who if they were so well affected that way that they should be, would wish rather and

> endeavour by all means to triumph now over the Romans in subduing their literature under the dent of the English pen, in requitall of the conquest sometime over this Island, atchieved by the edge of their sword. (16)

Renaissance optimism eventually gave way to a more sober realization of the still great disparity between classical and contemporary language and culture. Imitation of the classics, or more exactly, adherence to what were believed to be the classical rules of composition, continued, however, and gave to this period the tag of "neo-classical". But it is interesting to note a reflection of doubt, on the part of neo-classical writers, that the literature of Antiquity could in fact be rendered into vernacular translation without aesthetic and cultural change, if not loss. Some of the neo-classical translators became cautious and slavishly imitative; others apparently threw caution to the winds. The authors of the "belles infidèles" did not scruple to alter the sense and style of their sources in order to better serve the tastes and preoccupations of their own age. "Je me suis proposé, en mettant l'Iliade en vers," wrote Houdar de la Motte, foremost among the authors of the belles infidèles, "de donner un Poème François qui se fit lire." He defends his version over that of Mme Dacier in the following playful terms.

> Me D. se récrie d'abord contre mon infidélité...mais c'est peu que Me D. me croye infidèle, elle ajoute ironiquement, que je ne sçaurois mentir; & toute la grâce qu'elle me fait ensuite, c'est de me croire visionnaire plutôt que menteur. Cela m'accommode encore mieux... (17)

The Renaissance balance between fidelity to the original text, and creation of a new work in contemporary idiom was again divided, as in the Middle Ages, between those who advocated close versions and those who interpreted and adapted freely.

Among neo-classical writers, Dryden was one who once more extended

the concept of translation to include both literal and adaptive modes.

> All translation, I suppose, may be reduced to these three heads: first that of metaphase, or turning an author word by word, and line by line, from one language into another. ...The second way is that of paraphrase, or translation with latitude, where the author is kept in view by the translator, so as never to be lost, but his words are not so strictly followed as his sense; and that too is admitted to be amplified, but not altered....The third way is that of imitation, where the translator (if he has not lost that name) assumes the liberty, not only to vary from the words and the sense, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion; and, taking only some general hints from the original, to run divisions on the ground-work, as he pleases. (18)

Dryden described translation as he found it, rather than prescribing, as Dolet had done, guidelines for an ideal technique. But his description contains a theoretical assumption, nevertheless. Dryden's was the last age which could speak naturally of words and "sense", or meaning, as separable aspects of a literary text. Dryden considered the treatment of particular words in individual texts, but he ignored the larger cultural context of the language of these texts: the social and historical factors which are now recognized as capable of utterly changing the meaning of a text in translation.

Writers of the Romantic movement rejected the rationalist assumption of a meaning above and beyond the words by which it is expressed. Victor Hugo recognized that there were no perfect equivalents in different languages, but only approximate synonyms. He turned back to the Ciceronian image of balance for his explanation of the translation process.

> Le traducteur est un peseur perpétuel d'acceptions. Pas de balance plus délicate que celle que l'on met en équilibre des synonymes. L'étroit lien de l'idée et du mot se manifeste dans ces comparaisons humaines. (19)

Shelley stated this view at greater length, by recognizing that the

associations between ideas and words are essential and indivisible, but that this web of intuitive associations is abruptly substituted for another, different one in the process of translation.

> Sounds as well as thoughts have relation both between each other and towards that which they represent, and a perception of the order of those relations has always been found connected with a perception of the order of the relations of thoughts....Hence the vanity of translation: it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its colour and odour, as seek to transfuse from one language to another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring from its seed, or it will bear no flower--and this is the burthen of the curse of Babel. (20)

Shelley's conviction, shared by other nineteenth-century writers, was that words are natural phenomena in themselves, and that their forms and relationships are our principal guides to the exploration of all other phenomena, even to the nature of knowledge itself. If a word form is changed, therefore, as in translation, the meaning of the word is also trans-formed.[21]

Matthew Arnold's essay, On Translating Homer, yields to the full realization of what Shelley indicated still rather darkly. The rejection of rationalism, with its abstract forces and general qualities, had necessitated a search for reality based on disconnected, individual perceptions. Shelley's linguistic unity of sound and meaning made meaning dependent on sense perceptions, a dependence of which Arnold portrays the consequences.

> To press to the sense of the thing itself with which one is dealing...is the hardest matter in the world. The thing itself with which one is here dealing, the critical perception of poetic truth, is of all things the most volatile, elusive and evanescent: by even pressing too impetuously after it, one runs the risk of losing it...

The emphasis has now shifted, from the object observed to the observer, from the "thing itself" to the range of associations which the observer

brings to his perception of the object and by which he actually invests it with meaning. Hence Arnold's interest in the audience of a work of art, and in the translator's problem of having to satisfy his own audience, a public with a different pattern of linguistic and cultural associations from that to which the original text was directed.

> It is our translator's business [continues Arnold] to reproduce the effect of Homer and the most powerful emotion of the unlearned English reader can never assure him whether he has reproduced this or whether he has produced something else....No one can tell him how Homer affected the Greeks...the Greeks are dead; the unlearned Englishman has not the data for judging; and no man can safely confide in his own single judgment of his own work. (22)

Gone forever is the pride of a Philemon Holland, to "bring the classics home"; gone too is Dryden's reliance on the meaning of a text. Arnold, it will be noted, does not speak of meaning at all, but of effect--on the Greeks (hypothetical), and on contemporary Englishmen (problematic). In theory if not in practice, Arnold managed to turn Dolet and all the other theoreticians of translation inside out. The element taken for granted by St. Jerome, the humanists and the neo-classicists--that of an innate correlation between a given idea or object and <u>all</u> the linguistic signs and images which represent it--was questioned by the Romantic movement, analyzed but left unanswered by later nineteenth-century writers, and finally rejected in our own time.[23]

There continue to be formulations of theories of translation; most recognize that although translation in the traditional sense is impossible, the translator can re-create a work which corresponds to the original: it is Hugo's theory of synonyms restated, Cicero and Jerome re-interpreted in a very special sense. "Ce n'est pas seulement le sens qu'il s'agit de rendre," wrote André Gide to André Thérive in 1931,

> ...il importe de ne pas traduire des mots, mais des phrases, et d'exprimer, sans en rien perdre, pensée et émotion, comme l'auteur les eut exprimées s'il eut écrit directement en français, ce qui ne se peut que par une tricherie perpétuelle, par d'incessants détours, et souvent en s'éloignant beaucoup de la simple littéralité. (24)

The necessity for re-creation in translation is underlined by linguist Werner Winter, who maintains that

> ...not even "basic notions", central points in a human sphere of experience, stand outside the area of arbitrary segmentation and subsequent conventionalization; and the extent to which semantic boundaries, as determined by linguistic form and linguistic usage, coincide with absolute boundaries in the world around us, is negligible....A transfer from one language to another of the sum total of what is usually called..."connotative" meaning is an even more hopeless task. (25)

In a twentieth-century context, we may define translation as the approach and near convergence of independent but similar linguistic structures, each with its own cluster of associations and place in the oral and literary traditions of its culture or cultures. Translation as re-creation is to be recognized not simply as a level of artistic achievement, but as a linguistic necessity and as a characteristic even of so-called literal versions.

We have come to realize that language, and with it literature and translation, are measures however inadequate of our grasp of reality. Accordingly, it is always reflective of the general philosophic and cultural conceptions that are traditional or representative of the period in question. Similarly, history, which is our understanding of past reality, is derived from fragmentary evidence and because it is a reconstruction of these fragments, is inevitably anachronistic. As Arnold pointed out, expression, assumptions and tastes vary from culture to culture. We should therefore be careful of judging the approach to translation taken by another culture by the tastes and assumptions of our own.

The Greeks are dead; so are Malory and the Elizabethans. Literary criticism must acknowledge the relative character of both history and translation, and the effect of this relativity on our perception of literary tradition. And while we may always admire the translator who succeeds, like Valery's Cyprien, "à créer de la grâce au plus près de la gêne"[26], we must at the same time accord a wider definition to the term translation, in recognition that historically the practice of adaptive translation--the spirit of Chaucer and Gower, of Malory and the "belles infidèles"--has been one of the fundamental creative impulses of western literature.

In returning to the question of the Morte Darthur's successive versions, we should try to put our critical assumptions into a historical perspective, and try to understand as closely as possible the evolution of this work according to literary conceptions that only gradually became those we hold today. A historical perspective is necessary, because our critical understanding will never be more than relative and approximate.

We shall therefore begin with a view of late medieval English society and letters; what will emerge, hopefully, from this historical reconstruction is a better idea of the literary process and critical assumptions of that time. Instead of viewing the Morte Darthur as an isolated, "original" work subjected to four centuries of corruption before being rescued by Vinaver, we shall be able to see it as a version of an earlier romance tradition, which in turn was adapted to successive reading publics down to our own time.

NOTES.

1. Caxton, prologue to Eneydos, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. W. J. B. Crotch, EETS(OS) 176 (London: Oxford University Press, 1928), pp. 108-109.

2. Georges Mounin, Les Problèmes théoriques de la traduction (Paris: Gallimard, 1963) and George Steiner, After Babel (London: Oxford University Press, 1975). See also three British and American essay collections: Aspects of Translation, ed. A. D. Booth (London: Secker and Warburg, 1958); On Translation, ed. Reuben A. Brower (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959); The Craft and Context of Translation, ed. William Arrowsmith and Roger Shattuck (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1961). That the practical problems facing translators do not change, even though the theoretical view has varied from age to age, becomes evident as each of these writers takes up the same "dilemmas" of translation: see T. H. Savory, The Art of Translation (London: Jonathan Cape, 1957). Perhaps the most innovative, and most typical, twentieth-century contribution to the process is machine translation: see Emile Delavenay, An Introduction to Machine Translation, tr. Emile and Katherine Delavenay (New York: Praeger, 1960); Paul Garvin, On Machine Translation (The Hague/Paris: Mouton, 1972), and Machine Translation, ed. A. D. Booth (Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1967). But for literary translations, automatic transcription fails to take into sufficient account the connotative values of words, the choice of variants, the sentence rhythms, etc.--considerations of style which result in an aesthetic dimension and which make a piece of writing a work of literature. See the special number of Meta on "La Traduction littéraire", Meta XIV (March, 1969).

3. The Horatian phrase is quoted by Dryden, preface to his translation of Ovid's Epistles, in Works, ed. Sir Walter Scott, 18 vols. (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1821), XII, 12. Cicero and St. Jerome are discussed by Valery Larbaud, Sous l'invocation de Saint-Jérôme (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), pp. 43-56,82,98-99 and passim.

4. King Alfred's West Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care, ed. Henry Sweet, EETS(OS) 45 (London: Trubner, 1871), p. 7; Samuel K. Workman, Fifteenth-century Translation as an Influence on English Prose (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940), pp. 74-76.

5. Aelfric's Lives of the Saints, ed. W. W. Skeat, EETS(OS) 76 (London: Trubner, 1881), p. 2; Workman, Fifteenth-century Translation, pp. 78-79,87-88; Ian A. Gordon, The Movement of English Prose (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966), pp. 55,95 ff.

6. Flora Ross Amos, Early Theories of Translation (New York: Columbia University Press, 1920), pp. 56-59,66-67; cf. Reginald Pecocke, The Folewer to the Donet, ed. Elsie V. Hitchcock, EETS(OS) 164 (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), p. 7: "þou þo grete clerkis in clerist and liȝtist maner vndirstonde not derk processis of þe bible in latyn, ȝit þey ben in sum maner sweteli fed and edified bi redyng þerin..."

7. Lydgate, preface to The Pilgrimage of the Lyf of Man (1413), in Amos, Early Theories of Translation, p. 16.

8. Caxton, prologue to The History of Jason, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, p. 33.

9. Amos, Early Theories of Translation, pp. 7-8; Chaucer, prologue to The Legend of Good Women, in Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F. N. Robinson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), pp. 489-490; H. M. Cummings, The Indebtedness of Chaucer's Works to the Italian Works of Boccaccio (1916: New York: Haskell House reprint, 1965; Gower, Confessio amantis, in English Works of John Gower, ed. G. C. Macaulay, EETS(ES) 81 (London: Kegan Paul, 1900).

10. Léonard Constant (1580), in Roger Zuber, Les "Belles infidèles" et la formation du goût classique (Paris: Armand Colin, 1968), p. 27.

11. See chapters III and IX.

12. See chapter V.

13. Etienne Dolet, La Manière de bien traduire, reproduced in facsimile in Edmond Cary, Les Grands traducteurs français (Geneva: Georg, 1963), pp. 1-5.

14. Zuber, Les "Belles infidèles", pp. 28-31.

15. Sidney, An Apologie for Poetrie, in English Literary Criticism: the Renaissance, ed. O. B. Hardison, Jr. (New York: Appleton Century Crofts, 1963), pp. 143-145.

16. Philemon Holland (1600), in Francis O. Matthiessen, Translation: an Elizabethan art (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1931), p. 179.

17. Cary, Les Grands traducteurs français, pp. 61-79; Zuber, Les "Belles infidèles", passim. Antoine Houdar de la Motte, Discours sur Homère and Reflexions sur la critique, in Oeuvres complètes, 2 vols. (1754: Geneva: Slatkine reprint, 1970), I, 212,229-230. An example in English of the "belles infidèles" is Pope's translation of the Iliad, ed. Reuben A. Brower and W. H. Bond (New York: Macmillan, 1965).

18. Dryden, preface to Ovid's Epistles, in Works, ed. Scott, XII, 11-12.

19. Hugo, quoted by R. Lebidois, "La Traduction: art ou technique?", Le Monde (11 March, 1959).

20. Shelley, A Defence of Poetry, in Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, ed. Roger Ingpen and Walter E. Peck, 10 vols. (London: Benn, 1965), VII, 114. This objection notwithstanding, Shelley in fact translated may lyric and elegaic passages from classical Greek and

Latin works: see Shelley, Poetical Works, ed. Thomas Hutchinson (London: Oxford University Press, 1945), pp. 680-762.

21. The French Symbolist poets, prefigured by Baudelaire, emphasized the essential connection between sound and sense, as well as comparing poetic sound and rhythm with music. Arthur Symons, The Symbolist Movement in Literature (London: Heinemann, 1899), pp. 89-90, comments: "There are poems of Verlaine which go as far as verse can go to become pure music....It is not without reason that we cannot analyse [can we then translate?] a perfect lyric." Yet Baudelaire and the Symbolists, like Shelley, translated and were influenced by translations in their own works.

22. Matthew Arnold, On Translating Homer, in Selected Essays, ed. Noel Annan (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 80,110.

23. Mounin, Les Problèmes théoriques de la traduction, pp. 169-170.

24. André Gide, letter to André Thérive (1931), in Chemins de la traduction, ed. Louis Bonnerot (Paris: Didier, 1963), p. 119. Cf. Houdar de la Motte, Discours sur Homère, in Oeuvres complètes, I, 209: "...dès qu'on a une fois saisi le sens d'Homère, il ne faut plus songer à son expression, mais se demander seulement à soi-même, comment ce Poète dont on a une si haute idée exprimeroit un tel sens, s'il vivoit parmi nous; chercher ensuite dans notre langue de quoi exprimer ce sens avec grâce & avec force, & travailler toujours à y mettre la perfection, jusqu'à ce qu'on ne se sente plus capable de mieux faire." Both Gide and Valery echo this "infidèle" translator.

25. Werner Winter, "Impossibilities of Translation", in The Craft and Context of Translation, ed. Arrowsmith and Shattuck, pp. 69-73. Cf. J. C. Catford, A Linguistic Theory of Translation: an essay in applied linguistics (London: Oxford University Press, 1965).

CHAPTER III: CAXTON'S READING PUBLIC

What is known of Caxton's life may be drawn from contemporary evidence in the Mercers' Company rolls and in London civic records, in charters and payments, and through examination of typographical changes in his press.[1] The earliest reference to Caxton is in 1438, when he was apprenticed to the Mercers' Company, into which he was received in 1453. Two records of lawsuits, one in Holland in 1450 and another in London in 1455, show Caxton travelling between England and Flanders as a "merchant adventurer". He was subsequently elected Governor of the English Nation (the English merchants in Flanders), and lived permanently at Bruges until 1470. He then seems to have gone to Cologne to learn the art of printing, and to have returned to Bruges as a partner of Colard Mansion, where he printed several popular romances and began his work of translation. In 1476, he returned to England and set up a press at Westminster. At this press, he printed over one hundred editions, of which there are eighty separate titles. A good number of these are his own translations, mostly of French romances. Caxton died in 1491, an old man but still actively publishing; friends paid sixpence to burn candles for his soul, and Wynkyn de Worde inherited the business.[2]

Caxton printed the reading staples of his age: service books, saints' lives, school texts, romances, manuals of chivalry and guides to good manners. The virtues of these works were emphasized in the prologues and epilogues that Caxton appended to the texts, in order to justify his

selections and promote their sale.[3] An examination of these moralizing commentaries will indicate the reading public to which Caxton directed the majority of his press production, and will yield some evidence of its social and literary preoccupations.

On the basis of external evidence, the composition of Caxton's public must remain conjectural, since the extent of literacy is uncertain and there is, of course, no record of press circulation. The medieval notion of literacy was the ability to read Latin; anyone who went to school learned Latin and usually French as well.[4] But during the fifteenth century, there was, apparently, an increased ability to read and write English, and often French, that was even more widespread than evidence of the rapid growth of schools and colleges would indicate. The Paston, Stonor and Cely letter collections witness to literacy in all social ranks but the very lowest.[5] It was this vernacular literacy that provided an audience for the bulk of Caxton's publication. Conversely, the numbers of interested readers were increased by making more material available.[6]

As for direct evidence of press circulation, even today it is impossible, short of referring to subscription lists or specially commissioned surveys, to determine the readership of a given publication.[7] All that is known of Caxton's press is the approximate number of copies pulled at each printing: this number would vary from one hundred to four hundred copies, depending on the length and subject of the book in question.[8] Devotional works often ran to several editions, but the Golden Legende, Caxton's most elaborate undertaking could scarcely warrant a single impression. Obviously, however, even one hundred copies of a single work would have to appeal to a wider public than the tra-

ditional courtly audience.[9] The court, though numerous, could not be expected to support overwhelmingly every publication of Caxton's press.

On the other hand, if the internal evidence of Caxton's prologues and epilogues is considered, it would appear, at least at first reading, that his press drew its main benefits from noble patronage. The prologue to his first translation, The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye, which was printed while Caxton was still at Bruges, gives an account of the patronage of Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy.

> Sche...comanded me straytli to contynue and make an ende to the resydue than not translated, whose dredefull comandement y durste in no wyse disobey because y am a seruant vnto her sayde grace and resseiue of her yerly ffee and other many goode and great benefetes. (10)

Later, Caxton received an annual gift of "a bucke in sommer/ & a doo in wynter" from Lord Arundel, to encourage him to complete the Golden Legende. Other prologues include dedications to the Duke of Clarence, Edward Prince of Wales, Edward IV and Richard III, and Arthur Prince of Wales.[11] Caxton also answered specific requests for titles from Sir John Fastolfe, Lord Berkeley, the Earl of Oxford, and Henry VII's mother and wife.[12] He entered into an even closer relationship with Anthony Earl Rivers, who provided his press with translations of the Cordyale and the Dictes or Sayengs of the Philosophres.[13]

It is a misrepresentation, however, to imagine Caxton to be in the "service" of these nobles in his capacity as a printer, to imagine him associated with the court as Froissart and Chaucer had been a century before.[14] After seven years of successful operation, half his career as a printer, Caxton still described himself as a "cytezeyn & coniurye of [London] & of the fraternyte & felaushipp of the mercery".[15] This civic, mercantile attachment was more than sentimental: the city as well as the

court--in fact, even more than the court--patronized his press.

The prologues and epilogues, in spite of their façade of noble dedications, represent Caxton's own acknowledgement of the public that supported his enterprise. In the History of Jason, Caxton puts himself "vnder the proteccion & suffrance of...my most dradde naturel liege Lord Edward", yet Edward's protection is purely formal; the history is intended for the Prince of Wales, and even for the mention of the king in his prologue, Caxton is "moost humblie besekyng my sayd most drad souerayn & naturel liege lorde the kyng and also the Quene to pardon me so presumyng".[16] Obviously the king did not himself request the translation and printing, and the fact that the History of Jason was a printed edition of at least one hundred copies suggests that Caxton sought more readers for it than the Prince of Wales alone. More than once, Caxton mentions in his prologues that he has worked under the "shadow" of the king's favour, when the works thus prefaced were presented to other patrons. We may conclude that such mention of royal protection, except in specific instances of direct request, was a "dedication topos" derived from the earlier manuscript tradition.[17]

Many of Caxton's books remain undedicated because of their general appeal. Most of the devotional works were, as was Reynart the Foxe, "maad for nede and prouffyte of alle god folke", as "an example to the peple/ that they may ther by the better vse and folowe vertue".[18] Even when a book such as The Game and Playe of the Chesse was ostensibly dedicated to the Duke of Clarence, Caxton adds that he has made it available

> ...to thentent that other of what estate or degre he or they stande in, may see in this sayd lityll book/ yf they gouerned them self as they ought to doo. (19)

By printing the Polychronicon in a modernized translation, Caxton was aware that he was making a private book known to a wider readership.

> ...& furthermore [I] haue put it emprynte to thende that it maye be had & the maters therin comprised to be knowen/ for the boke is general touchyng shortly many notable maters. (20)

Similarly, Caxton presented Chaucer's translation of the Consolation of Philosophy to his readers, "hopyng that it shal prouffite moche people", and his Caton to the City of London, as a book meant "for all maner of peple".[21]

It is interesting to note that appeals to courtly patronage (in contrast to the number of titles published) fell off sharply during the troubled years of Richard III's protectorate and usurpation, although the Ordre of Chyualry was presented to the king himself. Works such as Troilus and Criseyde, The Book of the Knyght of the Toure, Charles the Grete, and the Morte Darthur, which were appropriate to such dedications, were offered instead to a general public which, as the prologues themselves testify, went beyond the nobility and gentry to include the bourgeoisie.[22]

Titles originally intended for the chivalric tastes of the landed classes were readdressed to include rich townsmen, who were "gentlemen", the equals of the nobility and gentry in all but name and pedigree. The powerful merchant companies gave their members wealth and political influence, as well as tastes to rival those of the court. Caxton could therefore extend Malory's appeal to "all jentylmen and jentylwymmen that redeth this book" to include explicitly "al other estates of what estate or degre they ben of/ that shal see and rede in this sayd book and werk".[23]

A broad and vague application of the term "gentleman" is evident also in Caxton's prologue to the Ordre of Chyualry. Although he follows his source in restricting the appropriate readership of this book, his phrasing makes such exclusiveness deceptive.

> [This book] is not requysyte to euery comyn man to haue/ but to noble gentylmen that by their vertu entende to come & entre in to the noble ordre of chyualry. (24)

Caxton's noble gentlemen are those who are noble in deed ("vertu") rather than by birth, and "entende...to entre in" to the order. In other words, this translation is dedicated to readers who have noble aims and feelings but who are not of necessity knighted or members of the feudal class.

Similarly, Cicero's Of Olde Age, in Caxton's view,

> ...is not requysyte ne eke conuenyent for euery rude and symple man, which vnderstandeth not of science ne connyng, and for suche as haue not herde of the noble polycye and prudence of the Romaynes, but for noble, wise/ & grete lordes gentilmen & marchauntes that haue seen & dayly ben occupyed in maters towchyng the publyque weal. (25)

The "marchauntes" slip almost unnoticed into this passage, into the company of the court and the country gentry, whether by flattery or by Caxton's own simple conviction of their equality.

The urban reading public represented for Caxton's press not only an important audience, but also an immediate and influential group of patrons. This fact is also revealed by a reading of the prologues and epilogues.

Caxton's patrons were, more often than not, his merchant friends and associates within the City of London. Caxton printed Boethius "atte requeste of a singuler frende and gossib of myne", and another friend, the "worshipful" Hugh Bryce, an alderman, commissioned The Mirrour of the World to present to Lord Hastings--it is thus Bryce, and not Hastings

who provided the "request, desire, coste and dispense" for its publication.[26] In the same way, "an honest man/ & a specyal frende of myn a Mercer of london named wylliam praat" asked for The Book of Good Manners while another "worshipful marchaunt & mercer of london" requested the Royal Book.[27]

Occasionally Caxton refers in his prologues to the "mass" market that was a necessary condition for the production and sale of printed books. During the hundred years before his introduction of the press, English manuscript workshops had increased literary circulation beyond that of a single patron and his friends, or at most, a select courtly audience.[28] These workshops could still operate on the basis of single copy commissions, whereas Caxton was forced to anticipate and satisfy a large number of readers with each edition. Devotional works and school books were sure of a sale, but when the Golden Legende threatened to be unprofitable, Lord Arundel was obliged to offer more than his yearly fee: he had to promise "to take a resonable quantyte of [copies] when they were achyeued & accomplisshed".[29]

Such a mixed public, together with Caxton's own merchant background, would lead to the expectation that the printer would be sympathetic to his own class and way of life, as distinct from the nobility and their code of chivalry. The surprising fact is that, in so far as he expressed an opinion on secular concerns, Caxton upheld the traditional feudal order and its chivalric values.[30]

The dominance of a conservative, even traditionalist outlook was the result of a brief convergence of two essentially incompatible factors: the close relationships between the English feudal and mercantile orders during this period, and the English imitation of French and Bur-

gundian courtly life.

The fifteenth century saw a transformation of English society from a feudal to a mercantile economy, at a rate so rapid and to an extent previously so inconceivable that contemporary moralists were frightened into seeing an end to order itself. Land and service, the feudal exchange, were translated increasingly into monetary terms, and a hierarchy of urban classes paralleled the traditional knightly and ecclesiastical orders.[31] By Caxton's time, the complexity of social interchange went far beyond previously acknowledged distinctions in rank. Merchants were knighted on occasion, a formal admission of their social as well as economic prominence. Conversely, the landed classes regularly associated themselves with commercial interests, by their membership in the merchant companies and by their active participation in trade. Even the king traded in the Staple, the English wool monopoly at Calais.[32]

It would be unusual if the feudal and urban orders did not thus share cultural as well as economic and social ties. In fact, they did have common cultural tastes and preoccupations--because these powerful merchants, whose rise to prominence owed nothing to feudal custom, gave themselves over to a studied imitation of aristocratic manners, virtues and institutions. Their commercial code, emphasizing corporate administration and a willingness to profit through personal effort and enterprise, was consciously subordinated to the chivalric code of feudal loyalty and largesse.[33]

The patent inappropriateness of this imitation was masked by the fact that, for western Europe in the fifteenth century, the traditional feudal code was inappropriate to the nobility as well. Burgundy, scene of the last "flowering" of courtly chivalry, was involved in only a peri-

pheral and expeditionary way in the Hundred Years' War. England's involvement was, if not peripheral, at least expeditionary. Yet the English were blind, if uneasy, in their emulation of the Burgundian style. The English urban class imitated at both first- and second-hand the brittle and arbitrary imposition of art on a changing reality by the rulers of their mercantile ally and rival. Moralists, including Caxton, could only urge a "return" to an always imaginary, ideal order.

> O ye knyghtes of Englond where is the custome and vsage of noble chyualry that was vsed in the dayes/ What do ye now/ but go to the baynes & playe atte dyse.../ leue this/ leue it and rede the noble volumes of saynt graal of lancelot ...of gawayn/ & many mo/ Ther shalle ye see manhode/ curtosye & gentylnesse/ And loke in the latter dayes of the noble actes syth the conquest/ ...rede froissart... (34)

In the same spirit, Caxton made a special appeal to Londoners to uphold the common weal, a religious concept reinforced by the classical example of the Romans.

> Ther is almost none/ that entendeth to the comyn wele, but only euery man for his singular prouffyte/ o whan I remembre the noble Romayns/ that for the comyn wele of the Cyte of Rome/ they spente not only theyr moevable goodes/ but they put theyr bodyes & lives in Ieopardy & to the deth... (35)

The image and context have changed, but the theme remains the same: Caxton's appeal to the City of London is in fact an expression of the same pessimism and nostalgia that characterizes his plea to the "knyghtes of Englond" and that informs the whole of Malory's Morte Darthur. Thus Caxton and Malory, the merchant printer and the knight prisoner, reveal comparable attitudes to contemporary social order and change. This is because, for the merchant as well as the knight, chivalry represented a long-sanctioned alternative to contemporary social disorder, even as this unrest was drawing England and Europe from feudalism into new social structures based on the rise of the bourgeoisie.

The separate cultural influence of the middle classes was felt only in the course of the sixteenth century. The printing press played an important rôle in this change, dispersing the "New Learning" of the humanists and later of the reformers. Loyal to the old order, Caxton could not have had any idea of the intellectual and social revolution in which his introduction of printing into England was a significant step. Like the pattern of his prologues and epilogues--the disparity between their traditional dedications to noble patronage and their actual appeal to a new, "mass" market--Caxton's achievement was to innovate within traditional forms and limits, to appeal to a newly literate public with the same courtesy and respect that earlier writers had lavished on their courtly audiences.

NOTES

1. William Blades, The Life and Typography of William Caxton, 2 vols. (1861: New York: Burt Franklin reprint, n.d.), vol. I, and The Biography and Typography of William Caxton, second ed. (London: Trubner, 1882); E. Gordon Duff, William Caxton (Chicago: Caxton Club, 1905); H. R. Plomer, William Caxton 1424-1491 (London: Parsons, 1925). N. F. Blake, Caxton and his World (London: Deutsch, 1969), presents the most recent discussion of the biographical evidence uncovered by Blades a century ago.

2. Caxton's biographers, including Blake, Caxton and his World, have expressed surprise that such an obviously successful merchant would have left his prosperous trade for the uncertain "adventure" of printing. There is, however, a natural link: as a mercer, Caxton would have seen a profitable outlet in supplying rags for paper manufacture. The demand for rags was greatly increased by the paper needs of the new presses. See Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, L'Apparition du livre (Paris: Albin Michel, 1971), pp. 39-60.

3. A Census of Caxtons, ed. Seymour de Ricci (Oxford: Bibliographical Society, 1909); The Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton, ed. Crotch.

4. Marjorie Plant, The English Book Trade, second ed. (London: Allen and Unwin, 1956), pp. 35-44; J. W. Adamson, "The Extent of Literacy in England in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries", The Library (fourth series) X (1930), 163-193; A. F. Leach, The Schools of Medieval England (London: Methuen, 1915), passim; Clara McMahon, Education in Fifteenth-century England (New York: Greenwood Press, 1958), pp. 31-39; Sylvia L. Thrupp, The Merchant Class of Medieval London 1300-1500 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), pp. 155-160. See also chapter IV.

5. Paston Letters, ed. James Gairdner, 4 vols. (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1910); Stonor Letters, ed. C. L. Kingsford (London: Camden Society, 1910); and Cely Papers, ed. H. R. Malden (London: Camden Society, 1900). Not only is the correspondence of landed gentlemen included in these collections; there are also letters sent to and from yeoman retainers and servants. See also A. B. Emden, "Learning and Education", in Medieval England, ed. Austin Poole, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), II, 515-540.

6. Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 30, note that "the mere introduction of writing into one area of a culture does not result in anything approaching literacy in the modern sense." Hence, although clerics had kept records throughout the Middle Ages, only the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries could be considered as a period of literacy in England, since for the first time, reading and writing became generalized skills of the laity.

7. H. S. Bennett, English Books and Readers 1475-1557 (Cambridge: Cam-

bridge University Press, 1952), p. 224; H. E. Bell, "The Price of Books in Medieval England", The Library (fourth series) XVII (1937), 312-332; Febvre and Martin, L'Apparition du livre, pp. 308-310. Cf. Donald Bond, "The First Printing of the Spectator", in The Practice of Modern Literary Scholarship, ed. S. P. Zitner (Glenview, Illinois: Scott and Foresman, 1966), pp. 136-150.

8. H. S. Bennett, "Caxton and his Reading Public", Review of English Studies XIX (1943), 113-119, and "The Author and his Public in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries", Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association XXIII (1938), 7-24; Strickland Gibson, "Printed Books, the Book Trade, and Libraries", in Medieval England, ed. Poole, II, 559-570. See also S. H. Steinberg, Five Hundred Years of Printing, revised ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1959), pp. 72-79; and Rudolf Hirsch, Printing, Selling and Reading (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1967), passim.

9. Karl Julius Holzknecht, Literary Patronage in the Middle Ages (1923: New York: Octagon reprint, 1966), pp. 55-115; Mary D. Stanger, "Literary Patronage at the Medieval Court of Flanders", French Studies XI (1957), 214-229; H. J. Chaytor, From Script to Print (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1945), pp. 5-13; H.S. Bennett, "The Production and Dissemination of Vernacular Manuscripts in the Fifteenth Century", The Library (fifth series) I (1947), 167-178.

10. Caxton, prologue to The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 4-5; cf. Crotch's introduction, Prologues and Epilogues, pp. xcviii-xcix, and Blake, Caxton and his World, pp. 46-55.

11. Dedication to the Duke of Clarence appears in The Game and Playe of the Chesse, to Edward Prince of Wales in Jason, to Edward IV in Godeffroy of Boloyne, to Richard III in The Ordre of Chyualry, and to Arthur Prince of Wales in Eneydos: see Caxton, Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 10,34,48,84,110.

12. Tullius Of Olde Age was suggested by Sir John Fastolfe, The Golden Legende by Lord Arundel, Blanchardyn and Eglantyne by Margaret Beaufort, The Four Sonnes of Aymon by Queen Elizabeth: see Caxton, Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 41,67,70,104-105,106,111.

13. Caxton's prologue prefacing Earl Rivers' translation of the Dictes gives this information: see Caxton, Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 18-30. See also N. F. Blake, "Investigations into the Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton", John Rylands Library Bulletin XLIX (1966), 17-46.

14. Rather surprisingly, most of Caxton's biographers have imagined him to be under noble and royal patronage--even Blake, Caxton and his World, p. 100, is no exception, although he stresses Caxton's merchant connections, pp. 33-37. Aristocratic favour and influence were indeed important, even essential, to Caxton's enterprise, but as it related to specific editions rather than as a regular form of

dependence. Caxton's "fees" were gifts rather than an income by which he could hope to support his press. Cf. Blades, Life and Typography, I, 70-71; Nellie Slayton Aurner, Caxton: mirrour [sic] of fifteenth-century letters (1926: New York: Russell and Russell reprint, 1965), p. 44; Colin Clair, A History of Printing in Britain (London: Cassell, 1965), p. 11; H. B. Lathrop, "The First English Printers and their Patrons", The Library (fourth series) III (1923), 69-96.

15. Caxton, prologue to Caton, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, p. 77.

16. Caxton, prologue to the History of Jason, Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 33-34.

17. Caxton, prologue to The Mirrour of the World, and the prohemye to the Polychronicon, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 58-59,67. For the "dedication topos", see E. R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, tr. Willard Trask (New York: Harper and Row, 1953), pp. 84-86,410-413; Holzknecht, Literary Patronage in the Middle Ages, pp. 127-139.

18. Caxton, prologue and epilogue to Reynart the Foxe, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 60-62.

19. Caxton, prologue to The Game and Playe of the Chesse, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, p. 12. This is Caxton's addition to the prologue of Jean Vignay, whose French version of the Latin text was the original for Caxton's translation into English.

20. Caxton, epilogue to the Polychronicon, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, p. 68.

21. Caxton, epilogue to Chaucer's translation of The Consolation of Philosophy, and the prologue to Caton, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 37,76-77.

22. Caxton avoided specific dedications of The Canterbury Tales' second edition (1484), Charles the Grete (1485), and Malory's Morte Darthur (1485). He dedicated the Caton (1483) to the City of London. Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 91,86-87,94-99,77. See Margaret Kekewich, "Edward IV, William Caxton, and Literary Patronage in Yorkist England", Modern Language Review LXVI (1971), 481-487.

23. Caxton, prologue to the Morte Darthur, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, p. 94; Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, p. 1260.

24. Caxton, epilogue to The Ordre of Chyualry, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, p. 82.

25. Caxton, prohemye to Tullius Of Olde Age, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, p. 43.

26. Caxton, epilogue to The Consolation of Philosophy, and the epilogue to The Mirrour of the World, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 37,52-53.

27. Caxton, prologue to The Book of Good Maners, and epilogue to The Royal Book, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 99, 102.

28. See note 9 to this chapter.

29. Blake, Caxton and his World, pp. 91-92.

30. A contemporary manual of chivalry is Caxton's translation of a French version of Ramon Lull's manual, written about 1250, and evidently still considered valid in the fifteenth century: The Ordre of Chyualry, ed. A. T. P. Byles, EETS(OS) 168 (London: Oxford University Press, 1926). See also the first chapter of Ruth Kelso, The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century (1929: Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith reprint, 1964). See chapter IV.

31. As evidence of the "bastard feudalism" of late medieval England, the Paston and Stonor letter collections contain estate inventories which give a monetary value to all items: Paston Letters, ed. Gairdner, nos. 332,333,530; Stonor Letters, ed. Kingsford, nos. 228, 233,283. An obvious result of this change in the economy was the new freedom of the retainer to shop around for the best employer. In addition, armies were no longer made up of feudal levies, but of soldiers (men-at-arms paid a "solde"). Cf. also the Cely Papers, ed. Malden, no. 86, and Paston Letters, ed. Gairdner, no. 2.

32. R. W. Southern, The Making of the Middle Ages (London: Grey Arrow, 1959), pp. 79-139; Denys Hay, Europe in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries (London: Longmans, 1966), pp. 127-132,153-161,380-393.

33. Thrupp, The Merchant Class of Medieval London, pp. 126, 154,278; Cora L. Schofield, The Life and Reign of Edward IV, 2 vols. (New York: Frank Cass, 1967), II,404-428. See also the Cely Papers, ed. Malden, no. 89, and Paston Letters, ed. Gairdner, no. 570, for evidence of intermarriage between gentry and merchant families. For other kinds of mutual recognition and interdependence, see the Cely Papers, ed. Malden, nos. 44,61,68-72; The Great Chronicle of London, ed. A.H. Thomas and E.D. Thornley (London: Royal Historical Society, 1938), pp. 228-229; Paul Murray Kendall, Richard the Third (London: Allen and Unwin, 1955), p. 132.

34. Caxton, prologue to The Ordre of Chyualry, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 82-83.

35. Caxton, prologue to Caton, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, p. 77; see also Thrupp, The Merchant Class of Medieval London, pp. 27-41,80-85,191 ff.

36. Febvre and Martin, L'Apparition du livre, pp. 246-265; Bennett, English Books and Readers, pp. 86-92,155 ff.

CHAPTER IV: ENGLISH ADAPTATION OF THE FRENCH CULTURAL TRADITION

The literature in English which developed during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was largely dependent on the establishment of a vernacular literary tradition in French during the previous two hundred years. Medieval French literature was, in turn, dependent on a revival of classical learning and on the expansion of feudal households to become centres of courtly culture. Vernacular literature expressed the refinement of social relations and of secular aims and values.[1] Thus the French tradition was both literary and social, a poetic expression of feudalism as it had developed from practical necessity into a social organization and way of life. Its adaptation to an increasingly defined English cultural tradition involved translation and a problematic confrontation between courtly ideals and political realities.

Because of continuous Norman and Angevin rule since the Conquest in 1066, French language, manners and intellectual orientation deeply influenced medieval English culture.[2] Although the English language continued to be spoken as popular, local dialects, the language of the court as well as law and the schools was French whenever the vernacular was used, until well into the fifteenth century.[3] Although there continued to be some writing in English throughout this period,[4] what survives of it is poor stuff compared with the French literature that developed under the Angevin régime.[5] The slow shift from French to English vernacular came only with England's political isolation and economic independence

at the end of the Hundred Years' War.

This period of transition from French to English was not, however, one of struggle and ultimate "victory" for English, as critics have recently described it.[6] Certainly Ranulf Higden, author of the Polychronicon, complained that

> ...pueri in scholis contra morem caeterarum nationum a primo Normannorum adventu, derelicto proprio vulgari, construere Gallice compelluntur: item, quod filii nobilium ab ipsis cunabulorum crepundiis ad Gallicum idioma informantur. (7)

The vocabularies and grammars which have come down from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries would seem to bear out Higden's observation.[8] Even so, when the shift to English as a national language was obviously under way, contemporaries regarded the change as a mixed blessing. In 1385, John Trevisa translated the Polychronicon into English and added the following comment to the passage quoted above.

> In alle þe gramere scoles of Engelond, children leueþ Frensche and construeþ and lerneþ an Englische, and haueþ þerby auauntage on oon side and disauauntage in anoþer side; here auauntage is, þat þey lerneþ her gramer in lasse tyme þan children were i-woned to doo: disauauntage is, þat now children of gramer schole conneþ na more Frensche þan can hir lift heele, and þat is harme for hem and þey schulle passe þe see and trauaille in straunge landes and in many oþer places. Also gentil men haue now moche i-left for to teche here children Frensche. (9)

In the end, literate Englishmen lost by the change, for instead of knowing three languages, they learned only two.

In spite of the emergence of English as a courtly and administrative as well as popular language, French did not lose all of its usefulness, nor did it lose any of its prestige. The Anglo-Norman dialect continued to be spoken in England until the early fifteenth century; however, along with the increased currency of English, the attraction of fashionable continental French threatened its survival. Chaucer's Prioress was

amusing not only because her Stratford-atte-Bowe French was imperfectly acquired, but also because it was noticeably Anglo-Norman rather than continental in pronunciation and vocabulary. The late medieval grammars were intended for instruction in a new language and also for correction of dialectal variation.[10] Thus, although French became a foreign language, respect like that of Higden's "rurales homines...ut per hoc spectabiliores videantur, francigenare stagunt omni nisu" persisted.[11] And this, in spite of the fact that many had to learn French from a clerk who had studied at Paris, or with the help of the "manières de langage" of which Caxton's Dialogues in French and English is an example.[12]

Moreover, it is questionable if an exclusive use of English because of ignorance of French could be argued as a condition for the development of English as a literary language. Chaucer, Gower, Lydgate, Pecocke and Hoccleve (the founders of the English literary tradition) knew all three languages--quite apart from the fact that ignorance is seldom a cause for positive creation of any sort. The development of English literature depended on familiarity with French literature, both Anglo-Norman and continental. This knowledge is the first condition of translation, the late medieval practice of which included not only literal versions, but also imitation and adaptation of forms and themes in "original" English works.

Much literary effort in England was devoted to this process of translation of earlier French literature. Writers were more aware of the inadequacies of English as a literary medium than they were partisan or defensive about using it. Dialectal variation represented the greatest difficulty, as Chaucer remarked near the end of Troilus and

Criseyde.

> And for ther is so gret diversite
> In Englisshe and in writyng of oure tong,
> So prey I God that non myswrite the,
> Ne the mysmetre for defaute of tonge.
> And red wherso thow be, or elles songe,
> That thow be understonde, God I biseche. (13)

A century later, Caxton could still testify to the same difficulty.

> Comyn englysshe that is spoken on one shyre varyeth from a nother. In so moche that in my dayes happened that [of] certayn marchauntes...one named sheffelde a mercer...axyd after eggys. And the good wyf answerde, that she coude speke no frensche. (14)

By contrast, the dialect of Ile-de-France had become the standard of courtly and bureaucratic French, and of French literature, as early as the thirteenth century.[15]

Chaucer's comment in the Troilus also referred to the rapid linguistic changes which had transformed English from Anglo-Saxon in the early medieval period to a later medieval form which more closely resembled French syntax and idiom, through a loss of inflections and a radical replacement of vowels.[16] By Caxton's time, Anglo-Saxon was virtually incomprehensible, "more lyke to dutche than to englysshe," as Caxton observed: "I coude not reduce ne bryng it to be understonden."[17] As the English language emerged once more into courtly and literary prominence, it returned bereft of its earlier literary tradition. Thus it was easily moulded into calques of French expressions and literary forms.[18]

On a stylistic level, Chaucer and Gower willingly undertook the imitation of French literary models. While other writers, anonymous for the most part, were repeating fragments of Anglo-Saxon poetic convention or were slowly translating French works of the twelfth century,

the writers of Richard II's court drew on the example of more recent works, from the Roman de la rose to the "formes fixes" of Guillaume de Machaut. Their imitation was creative, an adaptation of themes, images and forms that reflected not only their French origin but also the distinct, insular context of their English expression. The result was a "mixed style", a combination of elements that established English once more as a literary medium.[19]

Gower and Chaucer contributed to the literary development of the following century not so much by their characteristic adaptation (which we admire today) as by their successful calquing, of French models. Equally brilliant in their individual achievements, Langland and the Pearl Poet contributed little by comparison. When Caxton praised Chaucer's "quyck and hye sentences", and his "crafty and sugred eloquence", he was appreciating Chaucer's skilful employment of rhetorical rules, the verbal and formal elegance which had been characteristic of French literature since Chrétien de Troyes. The ability to imitate French forms and style, to equal French literary achievements in an English medium, was the legacy given by Chaucer and Gower to the English and Scots poets of the fifteenth century, and was the basis of a tradition of lyric and narrative poetry in English that has survived down to the present.[20]

On a thematic level, the central metaphors of this courtly literature were those of love and chivalry, ideals that were drawn from the literary models of Provençal and trouvère lyrics and the romances of Chrétien de Troyes and the "matière de Rome". When it was not satiric, Provençal poetry combined images of honour, adoration and suffering, while romances of the early twelfth century recast legends of the Trojan war and of Alexander in an idealized feudal context.[21] Chrétien employed

Celtic legends (the "matière de Bretagne") as figurative analogies for psychological and moral comment.[22] He set the ideals of love and chivalry against images of contemporary reality, but as time wore on, his successors blurred the distinctions between real and ideal in his romances, and imagined that the ideal element had been a historical reality. Thus Caxton pleaded with his contemporaries to "rede the noble volumes of saynt graal of lancelot...of gawayn/ & many mo" as well as to "rede froissart". Romance and history, always intimately associated, especially in the epic, were thought to yield a common moral truth.[23]

The realism of the later medieval period, dating, in terms of vernacular literature, from Jean de Meung's continuation of the Roman de la rose, was poor in new themes and forms and tended instead to review the earlier ones in an ironic light.[24] Instead of the twelfth-century concentration on figurative, psychological states, later vernacular literature substituted individualized, objective descriptions which contrasted with the generalized ideals. Writers such as Jean de Meung, Chaucer and Gower were able to counterpoint and exploit to artistic advantage the disparity between real and ideal. But lesser writers, and those of the fifteenth century tended to simplify the moral questions posed by their predecessors and to weigh their irony with pessimism and nostalgia. This tendency is evident in Villon's Testament, Chartier's Quadrilogue invectif, Lydgate's Fall of Princes and the Morte Darthur. The causes lie most probably in the social disruption and extended hardships of the Hundred Years' War and dynastic civil wars which followed it in both France and England.[25]

In order to maintain a pretense of the ideal in the face of disorder and change, the French, Burgundian and English courts resorted to sym-

bolic dramatizations of chivalry; ceremonies for the Order of the Garter became more elaborate, and the orders of the Etoile and the Toison d'or outdid even these in magnificence.

The best example of dramatic imposition of the chivalric ideal on the ruling class of a rapidly changing mercantile society is that of the Burgundian court of Philippe le Bel and his son, Charles le Téméraire. Enriched by the Low Countries' trade and wool industry, the court nevertheless maintained a strictly feudal order of rank and managed to ignore the events of the Hundred Years' War by means of a sham of ceremonies and tournaments inspired by chivalric fiction. The Burgundian historian Olivier de la Marche described at some length these "festes et ébatements", which created a precedent of splendour if not of knightly virtue. One description is of a tournament proclaimed in 1442, to be held the following year:

> ...par chacun jour sera trouvé pendant a l'arbre Charlemaigne ...deux escus, l'un noir, semé de larmes d'or; et l'autre violet, semé de larmes noires: dont celuy qui touchera ou fera toucher à l'escu...sera tenu de combatre...à l'encontre de l'un de ceux qui garderont le pas... (26)

Like the French nobility at Crécy and Agincourt a century before, the Burgundian courtiers eventually died for these dreams, in Switzerland with their rash leader Charles.

The reason for such a refusal to recognize or to take advantage of changing military and social conditions was that, for medieval society, the feudal order had come to represent order itself: time-worn but time-honoured virtues had simply to be restored to their original purity.[27] The medieval understanding of history was not a complex interrelationship of laws, mostly economic and sociological, such as we have come to accept since the eighteenth century. Instead, it was a conflict between

virtue and fortune, sin and atonement, within a just and perpetual heavenly plan. Augustine allegorized this idea as the image of two cities, earthly and divine.

> ...hoc est duas societates hominum, quarum est una quae praedestinata est in aeternum regnare cum Deo, altera aeternum supplicium subire cum diabolo....Hoc enim universum tempus sive saeculum, in quo cedunt morientes succeduntque nascentes, istarum duarum civitatum, de quibus disputamus, excursus est. (28)

Within the framework of this conception of history, the chivalric code represented a secular attempt to bring earthly life closer to divine perfection.

Removed, like Burgundy, from the scene of the Hundred Years' War, and oriented also towards a mercantile economy, England might well have produced an extreme of courtly chivalry resembling that of the court at Bruges but for the Wars of the Roses. Two positions regarding this conflict have been adopted by modern historians: economic and social historians tend to disclaim any general or lasting effect of this dynastic struggle, while modern political historians and contemporary chronicles stress the extent of popular suffering, violence and unrest.[29] The latter view seems to me to be more to the point, since it is the one recorded by contemporary chroniclers.

Whatever fighting that took place during this civil war was far from the chivalric model professed by the nobility. Philippe de Commynes, a Burgundian historian whose sober accounts of war and intrigue give the lie to more romantic accounts, observed that at the Battle of Barnet in 1471,

> Tout estoit à pied d'un costé et d'autre...[le] roy Edouard ...n'useroit plus de cette façon, de crier qu'on sauvast le peuple et qu'on tuast les gens de bien, comme il avoit autrefois fait en ces batailles précédentes; car il avoit

> conçu une très-grande hayne contre le peuple d'Angleterre ...pourquoy à cette fois ils ne furent point épargnés. (30)

Not only were the nobility killed rather than ransomed as the chivalric code dictated (for if ransomed they could live to fight another day), but the common people who followed them were slaughtered as well. This civil war was waged sporadically but mercilessly for twenty-five years, the battles followed by executions and scrambles for pardons, the conflict begun again for disparate reasons, dynastic and personal. The common people were the victims, naturally: a London chronicler reported that "the Rych were hangid by the purs, and the other...were hangid by the nekkis".[31] Instead of heroic single combats and elegant concessions to the honour of both parties, "there was the sone agayn the ffadyr, the broþyr agayn broþyr, the nevew agayn nevew".[32]

The lifetime of Sir Thomas Malory appears to have spanned a period of England's involvement in France and of the Wars of the Roses. His identification with a Warwickshire gentleman who followed Richard Earl of Warwick at the siege of Calais in 1436 is not certain; it has been challenged, although not conclusively, in favour of a Yorkshire knight whose reputation was not so much at variance with the writer Malory's sense of knightly honour. But Vinaver and most other critics of the Morte Darthur agree on the writer's identity with the Warwickshire outlaw.[33]

This Malory was born about 1400 and served the Earls of Warwick; the Public Records register his death on 14 March, 1471. Other evidence comes from legal charges, accusing Malory of theft, attempted murder, and abduction--an interesting reflection in an individual's life of the widespread lawlessness and violence that were symptomatic of fifteenth-

century political and social upheaval. From mid-century until his death, Malory was held at various times in various prisons; perhaps such periods of captivity were provoked not only by his charged crimes, but also by his political sympathies.[34]

It is small wonder that, in considering the events of his own time, Caxton could ask "where is the custome and vsage of noble chyualry" and Malory could adapt with such pessimism the French sources of the Morte Darthur. Malory could answer, unlike Chrétien, who regarded chivalry as a constant moral ideal, that chivalry, if it had ever existed, was no longer a principle of order or a standard of conduct. Like other English translations of the fourteenth and fifteenth century, Caxton's and Malory's versions of French romance reflected their contemporary English context and contributed to the emergence of a distinctly English literary tradition.

NOTES

1. Arnold Hauser, A Social History of Art, 4 vols. (New York: Vintage, 1951), I, 208-219; Paul Zumthor, Essai de poétique médiévale (Paris: Seuil, 1962), pp. 466-475.

2. G. O. Sayles, The Medieval Foundations of England (New York: Barnes, 1961), pp. 212-357; and W. Stubbs, Historical Introductions to the Rolls Series (London: Hassall, 1902). For surveys of Anglo-Norman literature, Johan Vising, Anglo-Norman Language and Literature (London: Oxford University Press, 1923); and M. Dominica Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background (Oxford: Clarendon Press,1963). W. L. Renwick and H. Orton, The Beginnings of English Literature (London: Cresset Press, 1952), pp. 404-405, relegate this literature to "A Note on Anglo-Norman". Comparable lack of recognition of a separate Anglo-Norman literature is reflected by Pierre leGentil, La Littérature française du moyen âge (Paris: Armand Colin, 1963); L. Kukenheim and Henri Roussel, Guide de la littérature française du moyen âge (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 1963); Paul Zumthor, Histoire littéraire de la France médiévale (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1954); W. P. Ker, Medieval English Literature (1912: London: Oxford University Press, 1962); and R. M. Wilson, The Lost Literature of Medieval England (London: Methuen, 1952).

3. Helen Suggett, "The Use of French in England in the Later Middle Ages", Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (fourth series) XXVIII (1946), 60-83. See also Jean Jacquot, "Les Lettres françaises en Angleterre à la fin du XVe siècle", in La Renaissance dans les provinces du nord, ed. François Lesure (Paris: Centre de la Recherche scientifique, 1956), pp. 72-89.

4. In an attempt to establish a connection between Old and Middle English literature, R. W. Chambers, On the Continuity of English Prose, EETS(OS) 186a (1932: London: Oxford University Press, 1957), turned to medieval devotional prose, in particular the Ancrene Riwle, and there traced an indigenous literary tradition which had apparently survived the Conquest. Chambers' book created considerable interest (one must say as much when an EETS publication goes through three printings in twenty-five years). Gordon, The Movement of English Prose, gives Chambers' thesis its most recent strong support, and also gives much attention to the importance of the Ancrene Riwle. Cf. A. A. Prins, French Influence in English Phrasing (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 1952), pp. 8-20, who shows that there are in fact many phrasal patterns in the Ancrene Riwle that were imitated from French. See Elizabeth Zeeman, "Continuity in Middle English Devotional Prose", Journal of English and Germanic Philology LV (1956), 417-422.

5. The Ancrene Riwle is dated approximately 1200: during the century before and after this date (that is, 1150-1250), the Norman and Angevin régimes fostered the development of the romance genre--the Roman de Thèbes, the Roman de Troie of Benoît de Sainte-Maure, the

Roman d'Enéas, Wace's Brut, the Lais of Marie de France, and three Tristan romances, as well as romanticized accounts of Fouque Fitz Warin and Richard Coeur de lyon. During the same period, English literature produced a few saints' lives, the Ancrene Riwle and its variations, King Horn, Layamon's Brut (based on that of Wace), and one masterpiece, The Owl and the Nightingale. Whatever the merit of the individual English compositions, together they cannot equal the sophistication and influence of the works in French. English critics' attempts to ignore or diminish the importance of this literature in French, like the French critics' willingness to include it without special distinction in the continental literature of the same period, is remarkable. See Zumthor, Histoire littéraire de la France médiévale, pp. 176-178; Renwick and Orton, The Beginnings of English Literature, pp. 404-405; Urban Tigner Holmes, Jr., A History of Old French Literature, revised ed. (New York: Russell and Russell, 1962), pp. 133-145,157-192, and (by the same author), "Norman Literature and Wace", in Medieval Secular Literature: four essays, ed. William Matthews (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 46-67; A Manual of Writings in Middle English 1050-1400, ed. John Edwin Wells (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1926), pp. 27-138; and Ruth Dean, "What is Anglo-Norman?", Annuale mediaevale VI (1965), 29-46.

6. Basil Cottle, The Triumph of English 1350-1400 (London: Blandford Press, 1969), calls his first chapter, "French loses its grip", and William Matthews, Later Medieval English Prose (New York: Appleton Century Crofts, 1963), p.2, speaks of "a resolution of local rivalries that made English once again a language worthy of English pens, and French an enemy language to be learned in classroom or abroad." The Hundred Years' War did indeed embitter France and England. But were dynastic and even emerging national rivalries so specifically associated with linguistic expression? See also Ian Robinson, Chaucer and the English Tradition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972); cf. Ker, Medieval English Literature, pp. 57-65; and Mildred Pope, From Latin to Modern French (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1934), pp. 420-425.

7. Ranulf Higden, Polychronicon, ed. Churchill-Babington, 9 vols., Rolls Series (London: Longmans, 1865-1886), II, 158.

8. Kathleen Lambley, The Teaching and Cultivation of the French Language during Tudor and Stuart Times (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1920), pp. 8-56; W. Rothwell, "The Teaching of French in Medieval England", Modern Language Review LXIII (1968), 37-46.

9. Higden, Polychronicon, ed. Babington, II, 161.

10. Pope, From Latin to Modern French, p. 425; Chaucer, "General Prologue" to The Canterbury Tales, in Complete Works, ed. Robinson, p. 18.

11. Higden, Polychronicon, ed Babington, II, 159-161.

12. Caxton, Dialogues in French and English, ed. Henry Bradley, EETS (ES) 79 (London: Oxford University Press, 1900); N. F. Blake, "The Vocabulary of French and English Printed by William Caxton", English Language Notes III (1965), 7-15; Astrick L. Gabriel, "Les Etudiants étrangers à l'Université de Paris au XVe siècle", Annales de l'Université de Paris XXIX (1959), 377-400.

13. Chaucer, Troilus and Criseyde, V, ll. 1792-1798, in Complete Works, ed. Robinson, p. 479. See also A Book of London English 1384-1425, ed. R. W. Chambers and M. Daunt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1931), passim; and John Nizt, A Structural History of English (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1966), pp. 167-168.

14. Caxton, prologue to Eneydos, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, p. 108; Pope, From Latin to Modern French, pp. 421-422.

15. Alexis François, Histoire de la langue française cultivée, 2 vols. (Geneva: Jullien, 1959), I, 94-96. Cf. Higden, Polychronicon, ed. Babington, II, 160: "Ubi nempe mirandum videtur, quomodo nativa et propria Anglorum lingua, in unica insula coartata, pronunciatione ipsa sit tam diversa; cum tamen Normannica lingua, quae adventitia est, univoca maneat penes cunctos." Trevisa adds: "Neuerþeless þere is as many dyuers manere Frensche in þe reem of Fraunce as is dyuers manere Englische in þe reem of Engelond." The title of François' study may be the key to this apparent contradiction: the cultivated dialect in France had become uniformly that of Ile-de-France.

16. Albert C. Baugh, A History of the English Language (New York: Appleton century Crofts, 1935), pp. 189-200; Otto Jespersen, The Growth and Structure of the English Language (1938: Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), pp. 168-198.

17. Caxton, prologue to Eneydos, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, p. 109. Cf note 4 of this chapter.

18. See chapter V; and cf. note 4 of this chapter.

19. Charles Muscatine, Chaucer and the French Tradition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), pp. 1-97 and passim; James Wimsatt, Chaucer and the French Love Poets (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968); J. A. Burrow, Ricardian Poetry (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971); D. W. Robertson, Jr., A Preface to Chaucer (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), pp. 241 ff.; D. S. Brewer, "The Relationship of Chaucer to the English and European Traditions", in Chaucer and Chaucerians, ed. Brewer (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson, 1966), pp. 1-38; also C. S. Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic (1928: Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith reprint, 1959), pp. 280-301.

20. Caxton, prohemye to The Canterbury Tales, and prologue to Eneydos, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 90,109. See Muscatine, Chaucer and the French Tradition, pp. 244-247; Denton Fox, "The Scottish Chaucerians", in Chaucer and Chaucerians, ed. Brewer,

pp. 164-200; Ian Robinson, Chaucer's Prosody: a study of Middle English verse tradition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 186-189,213 ff. Cf. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" in The Sacred Wood, p. 48: "We dwell with satisfaction upon the poet's difference from his predecessors; we endeavour to find something that can be isolated in order to be enjoyed. Whereas if we approach a poet without this prejudice, we shall often find that not only the best, but the most individual parts of his work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously."

21. Zumthor, Essai de poétique médiévale, pp. 346-350.

22. Zumthor, Essai de poétique médiévale, pp. 351-361,475-483; Urban Tigner Holmes, Jr., Chrétien de Troyes (New York: Twayne, 1970). The division of medieval romance into three "matières" (Rome, France, and Britain or Brittany) was first made by the dramatist Jean Bodel at the beginning of the thirteenth century, and has been adopted generally by nineteenth- and twentieth-century specialists in medieval vernacular literature.

23. Caxton, prologue to The Ordre of Chyualry, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 82-83; Scholes and Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative, passim.

24. Auerbach, Mimesis, pp. 121-122; Zumthor, Essai de poétique médiévale, pp. 371-375, and Histoire littéraire de la France médiévale, pp. 244-255,278-279.

25. Kenneth Fowler, The Age of Plantagenet and Valois (London: Elek, 1967) gives a general account of the period of the Hundred Years' War. Contemporary chronicles include Olivier de la Marche, Mémoires, and Philippe de Commynes, Mémoires, in Choix de chroniques et mémoires sur l'histoire de France: XVe siècle, ed. J. A. C. Buchon (Paris: Paul Daffis, 1876); as well as Cuvelier, Chronique de Bertrand de Guesclin, ed. E. Charrière (Paris: Didot, 1839).

26. Olivier de la Marche, Mémoires, in Choix de chroniques et mémoires, ed. Buchon, p. 376. See also Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages (New York: Doubleday, 1954), pp. 85-107; R. L. Kilgour, The Decline of Chivalry as Shown in the French Literature of the Late Middle Ages (1937: Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith reprint, 1966), pp. 226-296; R. Vaughn, Philip the Bold: the formation of the Burgundian state (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962).

27. A. R. Myers, England in the Late Middle Ages 1307-1536 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963), p. xiii; Arthur B. Ferguson, The Indian Summer of English Chivalry (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1960), pp. 29 ff.

28. E. H. Carr, What is History? (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961), pp. 56 ff.; R. G. Collingwood, The Idea of History (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 46-58; St. Augustine, De civitate Dei, ed.

B. Dombart, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Tübner, 1905), XV:1, in II, 58. See also G. Duby and R. Mandrou, Histoire de la civilisation française, 2 vols. (Paris: Armand Colin, 1958), I, 183-184,207-211.

29. Concerning the Wars of the Roses, modern historians adopt two positions which are virtually contradictory: on the one hand, political historians such as E. F. Jacob, The Fifteenth Century 1399-1485 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), and Schofield, The Life and Reign of Edward IV, give detailed accounts of the battles and skirmishes marking the conflict between York and Lancaster; on the other hand, economic and social historians play down military and purely political details to emphasize instead a general trend to economic prosperity and greater social mobility. Thrupp, The Merchant Class of Medieval London, scarcely mentions the wars, while J. R. Lander, The Wars of the Roses (New York: Putnam, 1966) and Paul Murray Kendall, The Yorkist Age (London: Allen and Unwin, 1962) are intent on minimizing the importance of unrest during this period--to the extent that Kendall relegates his account of the wars to an epilogue. The truth probably lies between the two extreme views. But it is necessary also to take into account the contemporary reaction to these conflicts, as recorded in the chronicles and memoirs, and to realize that the whole of English society was involved: one out of five Englishmen fought at the second Battle of St. Albans, for example. One aspect of the wars is undisputed, however--that fighting which did take place was far from conforming to the ideal of knightly combat to which both sides still paid lip service.

30. Commynes, Mémoires, in Choix de chroniques et mémoires, ed. Buchon, pp. 71-75. See also Paston Letters, ed. Gairdner, no. 239.

31. The Great Chronicle of London, ed. Thomas and Thornley, p. 220.

32. The Great Chronicle of London, ed. Thomas and Thornley, p. 196; see also C. L. Kingsford, English Historical Literature (1913: New York: Burt Franklin reprint, 1962), pp. 70-113.

33. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. xix-xxvii; Vinaver, Malory, pp. 1-9; Lewis, "The English Prose Morte", in Essays on Malory, ed. Bennett, pp. 7-11; and William Matthews, The Ill-framed Knight (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966). It should be noted that to "redeem" Malory from the reputation of the Warwickshire records is unnecessary; there is no essential connection between moral virtue in life and artistic virtue in literature.

34. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, p. xxv.

CHAPTER V: LATE MEDIEVAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The difficulties facing English writers of the late medieval period were, as we have seen, twofold: their literary tradition was not of long standing, and their language was still too primitive and popular to express the themes and styles found in Latin and French works.[1] For both difficulties, translation furnished an obvious solution.

Because French prose had flourished since the early 1200's, there was comparatively little precedent or incentive to write in English prose. Even writers who chose English as their linguistic medium modelled their works on French and Burgundian themes and forms, or translated directly from the older, richer and more sophisticated body of prose literature. Caxton's entire range of texts, for example, may be traced to the possessions of the Burgundian ducal libraries.[2] In the late fifteenth century, approximately two thirds of English literary production consisted of translations; from Caxton's press alone, although it printed all of the still-known literary works in English, there numbered forty-six translations out of eighty separate titles, over half its total output.[3]

Such translations were made increasingly in prose, a tendency which marked an important development in the language itself as well as in the refinement of literary style. Chaucer and Gower had imported French metrical forms a century before, but during the fifteenth century, the fashion for metre (which had even extended to the translation

of French prose romances into English verse) yielded to a preference for prose.[4] The change was more than a simple matter of taste and fashion, however; it occurred as a result of increasing concern for accuracy of detail, itself a result of a greater interest in purely historical and factual information, separated from the moral lessons and eschatological context of earlier medieval writing. For example, a fifteenth-century translation of Higden's Polychronicon rendered even the occasional verse passages into prose form.[5] In part, this concern for accuracy derived from the medieval word-for-word conception of translation; but by the end of the period, translations were made in prose as much in answer to the new concern for fact and detail as to the traditional idea of translation.

In practice, late medieval translation from French influenced English style in a way and to an extent that the traditional presence of Latin had not, up to that point.[6] English and Latin are languages of fundamentally different constructions and movement; thus the rhetorical Artes designed to improve literary style in Latin had little effect on English syntax and were useful only to suggest poetic ornament rather than basic narrative structure. This effect was compounded by the emphasis within these manuals themselves on ornament rather than structure. French became a sort of intermediary between Latin and English, absorbing grammatical lessons from Latin and passing them into English in the form of vernacular examples.[7] As a translator, Caxton was among the first of the English prose writers to participate in the linguistic and stylistic development of their medium by means of adaptation and assimilation of vernacular literature.

We may examine in turn firstly, the special problems of transla-

tion which faced English writers of the late medieval period, and secondly, the evolution of the romance genre by means of translation during this period.

In Caxton's time, writers were still content to learn by imitation of foreign models, yet they were obliged time and again to make allowance for the language itself and the impulse to write English as they spoke it. That Caxton was aware of the rhetorical choices open to him is amply demonstrated in the prologues and epilogues: the exts he published were prefaced and concluded with appropriate commentary echoing the tone of the works in question.[9] But although he patterned the style of his commentaries on that of the texts they accompany, in many cases the resources of vocabulary and flexibility of syntax found in his contempoary English were inadequate, so that his writing often appears childish and inelegant in comparison. On the other hand, he managed to achieve a certain fluent simplicity if the text was undemanding or the occasion familiar; in these cases, he could furnish the appropriate conventional phrases.

Caxton and his contemporaries could not hope to imitate the concise expression of inflected Latin nor the structures which had passed from Latin into French virtually unchanged, without sacrificing an authentic English style derived in part from its popular evolution since the Conquest. Obviously the solution to this dilemma lay in compromise. A fine English style would be neither limited to a popular simplicity nor imitated wholesale from French and Latin. It was not until the following century, however, that such a compromise was achieved and a style both distinctive and elegant was perfected.[10]

We may see this unresolved polarity in fifteenth-century English

translation--on the one hand, translation to a highly derivative and stilted English that closely imitated the structures of the source text, and on the other hand, to a fluent rendering of conventions when the source presents a familiar situation.

An example of translation from Latin to English is the fifteenth-century version of Higden's Polychronicon, made by an anonymous writer around 1450.

> Post praeclaros artium scriptores, quibus circa rerum notitiam aut morum modestiam dulce fuit, quo adviverent, insudare, illi merito, velut utile dulci commisentes, grandisonis sunt praeconiis attollendi, qui magnifica priscorum gesta beneficio scripturae posteris derivarunt.
>
> After the noble wryters of artes, to whom hit was a pleasure in this life presente to fixe theire studies and laboures abowte the knowlege of thynges and virtues morall, thel ar to be enhaunsede and exaltede by merite with grete preconyes, as makenge a commixtion of a thyng profitable with a swetenesse mellifluous, whiche haue deriued to men succedenge thro the benefite of scripture thexcellent gestes of men precedenge. (11)

As a direct translation from Latin, this passage retains a logical structure and aims at the "high style" described in the Artes.[12] Yet its periodic balance, and the neat contrast between "succedenge" and "precedenge" are overwhelmed by the large proportion of latinate words and the presence of following modifiers ("thynges and virtues morall", "thynge profitable", "sweteness mellifluous") rather than standing out in a vocabulary and syntax of fluent, unpretentious English.

Most vernacular writing answered to the familiar "middle" and "low" styles of the Artes. An example is found in Caxton's translation of a letter written by the hero of Paris and Vienne to his father.

> Et vous plaise pour Dieu moy pardonner tout ce que je mesfeis oncques vers vous, affin que, quant a Dieu plaire que je doye finir ma doleureuse vie, que je meure en vostre grace, affin que Dieu ait mercy de mon ame.

> I praye you that it may playse you that I deye not in your euyl wylle/ but humbly byseche you that it playse you to pardonne me/ and to gyue to me your benedyctyon. Also dere syr and fader I praye you & supplye that my dere brother and felowe Edward ye wyl take in my name and place/ and that he be recommaunded as your sone in stede of me/ as wel in your herytage as in other thynges/ and the grace of the holy ghoost be wyth you/ Recommaunde me to my moder, &tc. (13)

This passage illustrates one of the rare occasions on which Caxton permitted himself to add to his source. The French text is elaborated by means of conventional epistolary phrases, as comparison with the Paston, Stonor and Cely letter collections will indicate.[14] This text, contained within a simple narrative and presenting a familiar situation (a discussion of inheritance between father and son) evidently provoked enough confidence in the old printer that he built a few "original" phrases onto the model provided. Like Malory's addition to the Lady of Shallot sequence in the Morte Darthur, Caxton's addition merely extends the idea of his source.[15]

Even when translated passages include additions and adaptations, dependence on an idea provided in the source is not unusual; it is even typical of the translations of this period. The Cambridge MS of the prose Merlin, dated 1460, provides the following dialogue between Kay and his father, in which there is revealed a sensitive interplay of strong emotion and formal deference.

> Whan Antor sigh the ston, and the swerde not therynne, he seide, "Feire sone, how hadde ye this swerde? Loke ye, do not lye; and thow do lye, I shall it knowe wele, and neuer shall I the loue." And he ansuerde as he that was sore ashamed, "I shall yow lye no lesynge, for my brother Arthur it me brought whan I badde hym to go fecche myn, but I wote neuer how he it hadde." Whan Antor herde this, he seide, "Sone, yeve it me, for ye haue ther-to no ryght." (16)

With their attention to idiom and their reliance on everyday English

constructions in narrative and dialogue, the romance translations of this period are noticeably successful in reproducing these forms. The conversation in the Merlin flows as smoothly and colloquially as if it had been conceived in English, instead of representing a translation from the French Vulgate Merlin.

> Quant Antor vit le perron dont l'espee estoit ostee si dist: "Kés, ne me ment pas. Comment ostastes vous ceste espee? Car se vous me mentés, sel savrai jou bien, et ja mais ne vous ameroie." Et cil respont comme cil qui ot honte, et dist: "Sire, je ne vous mentirai pas. Artus mes freres le m'aporta, si ne sai comment il l'ot." Quant Antor l'ot, si dist: "Bailliés le moi, biau fieus." (17)

However, as we shall see below when considering Malory's skill in creating dialogue, even such a perfectly adapted and colloquial passage needed a basic theme, a "dialogue idea" in French that would serve as a starting point for its construction and amplification in English.[18]

Departures from the source were not frequent in late medieval English translation. Although it was possible to make adaptive translations at this time, most English prose versions are word for word, at best idiom for idiom renditions of their sources, following the medieval understanding of St. Jerome's principle. The average fifteenth-century translation remained close to its source, as shown by this example from Caxton's translation of the Chevalier de la Tour-Landry:

> Sy vous pry, belles filles, qu'il vous vueille souvenir de de cest exemple, car tout bien et tout honneur vous en puet venir, et si est une vertu qui eschieve moult de haynes et de maulx. Car je scais et cognois plusieurs qui ont moult perdu et ont souffert moult de mal et de tres grans haynes pour trop legierement parler d'autruy et pour recorder les maulx qu'ils oyent dire d'autruy, dont ilz n'ont que faire. Car nul ne scet que luy est a venir. Et cellui et celles sont saiges de sens naturel qui ne sont mie nouveliers, c'est a dire qui se gardent de recorder la faulte ne le mespris d'autrui. Car Dieux aime celui qui desblame ceux que l'on blasme, soit a tort, soit a droit, car a taire le mal

> d'autrui ne puet venir que tout bien, si comme il est contenu ou livre des saiges, et aussi en une evangile.
>
> Therfore I pray yow fayr doughters that ye wylle haue this ensample in your memory and neuer forgete it/ For all good and worship may therof come to yow/ And hit is a vertue the whiche escheweth grete hate and grete enuye and many euyls also/ For many one I knowe whiche haue loste moche of theyr goodes/ & suffred many grete euyls for to haue spoke to lyghtely of other/ and for to haue reported suche wordes as they herd saye/ of the whiche they had nought to doo at al For nonesco wyse is that may knowe what to hym is to come/ And full of naturel wytte be they/ which kepe them self fro recordynge of ony wordes/ For he whiche wythsayeth them that blameth other as wel in ryght as in wronge/ he doth but wel/ And for to hold and kepe secretely the dommage and euylle of other may come but good/ as hit is reherced in the booke of my two sonnes And also in an Euangely (19)

With the exception of "the booke of my two sonnes", this is a literal translation. However well the translators of this period handled idiom when the source text offered familiar situations and simple narrative events, they defaulted when faced with complex syntax in the source.[20] They failed to grasp the sense of whole passages because, following the word-for-word principle of translation, they handled only a phrase at a time, and, writing in English, they were often hard pressed to duplicate the hypotactic constructions of Latin and French. In the passage from The Book of the Knyght of the Toure quoted above, for example, Caxton translates word for word, even to inverting the natural order of English ("que luy est a venir" / "what to hym is to come"). He has difficulty in relating each of his phrases to a central subject and predicate, and so loses the sense amongst repeated "the whiche" clauses that string after each other rather than cluster around a grammatical nucleus.

Although translation at this time still produced versions that were inferior to their sources in vocabulary and style, the Latin and French works were before English writers as models of literary traditions already perfected in syntactical logic and rhetorical expressiveness. It was

simply a process of gradual assimilation and refinement that eventually produced the unparalleled prose translations of the following century. Caxton's main contribution to this process lay not in his word-for-word translations, but rather in his rôle as a distributor and popularizer of French literary works. His choice of texts, as well as indicating current English literary taste, also helped to develop that taste in a growing reading public. It is therefore in these two respects that we may consider part of the Caxton canon as a factor in the development of and English literary tradition, from its continental French and Burgundian precedents.[21]

Caxton's eight translations of French romances, as well as his publication of Malory's translation of the Arthuriad, provided transmission to England of the continental taste for chivalric romance. These romances illustrate the evolution of the romance genre after it was thus translated into English: what appears to dominate this late phase is a preoccupation with historical events and social change. At this stage, romance was transformed from a poetic to a historical fiction, by successive modification of its balance of generic elements.

As we have seen, there were signs of a growing consciousness that the whole of late medieval society was indeed changing, fundamentally and irrevocably.[22] This awareness resulted in a shift in the historical perspective on the part of the chronicle writers to a more critical and comprehensive view of events. As well, there was an increase in the level of interest in the chronicles as evidenced by the publication of hitherto private or local accounts. Notable in Caxton's canon are repeated printings of Higden's Polychronicon (Trevisa's translation modernized and continued by Caxton himself), The Chronicle of England,

The Description of Britain, and also The Myrrour of the World and The Game and Playe of the Chesse. These texts are representative of the many chronicle histories and "specula mundi" that circulated during this period, to which may be added personal memoirs such as those of Froissart and Commynes.[23]

At the same time, earlier histories were fictionalized: associated with legends and shaped by narrative conventions, certain historical characters and events took on the trappings and purpose of romance. Such a history is Caxton's Godeffroy of Boloyne. Its raw material is the life of one of the leaders of the First Crusade, but it becomes a romance of the "noble prowesses and valyaunces" of one of the nine worthies, an honour roll that included, as well as Caesar and the already romanticized Alexander, legendary characters such as Hector of Troy and Arthur of Britain.[24]

As a result of this attention to history, though still confused with legend, the twelfth-century romance, with its accent on psychological states and the frequent isolation of the hero from his society, was neglected in favour of a return to preoccupations more characteristic of epic than of poetic romance. In the late medieval English romances, epic elements surviving in romance were reasserted, and there was a renewed link established with actual historical events. The movement of twelfth-century romance toward mythology and moral introspection became in later romance an interaction of these elements with a renewed interest in history, and in the fate of social groups as well as individuals.[25] Caxton's romances illustrate this development.

In Caxton's Eneydos, epic elements present in the romance tradition of the Troy story are reaffirmed by direct reference to Virgil's

poem, itself a balance of epic and romance tendencies. The Eneydos, in contrast to the twelfth-century poetic Eneas, contains little description (no accounts of dress, armour, or the splendid funerals of Camilla and Pallas) and no exploration of sentiment (no sign of the interior monologues in which Dido, Lavine and Eneas examine their attitudes to love). The very characteristics which distinguished the earlier Eneas as a romance have disappeared: instead of romance within an epic frame, the Eneydos offers epic in the guise of romance.[26]

Raoul Lefevre's History of Jason, printed by Caxton in French and then in his own English translation, was composed to celebrate Burgundian success in the wool trade and the foundation of the Ordre de la Toison d'or, by Philippe le Bel. It is another example of romance returning full circle to epic preoccupations. The author of Jason rejected the intimate focus of earlier romance; the reason for writing the history was, after all, to place the Dukes of Burgundy in relation to an epic, heroic past. Arthurian legend was similarly used by the Tudor monarchs of England in the sixteenth century.[27]

As well as its new epic and historical emphasis, late medieval English romance tended to condense the earlier romances, usually organized into biographical cycles, into simplified, independent romances. The late redactions on occasion retained the biographical framework, but compressed the events of the protagonist's life into a shorter, continuous story.[28] The effect of this compression and simplification was to remove the earlier sense of timelessness and the labyrinthine "entrelacement", or interlace, of characters, and to replace these with a single story line that emphasized development of narrative events. This emphasis on essential narrative movement rather than infinite digression

not only reflected a logical reversal within the genre, but also constituted an admission, in literary terms, of the historical perspective which had prompted a renewed accent on epic elements.

Charles the Grete, published in the same year as the Morte Darthur, is an example of late medieval compilation of cyclical romance. The phase of reduction, or compression, within the cyclical framework was rarely accomplished with elegance and purpose; Malory's compilation is an exception, for the most part, in this respect. Caxton's Charles is an awkward amalgam of several "chansons de geste" and part of the Speculum historiale of Vincent de Beauvais.[29] The joints plainly show: the compiler, like the author of Eneydos and unlike Malory, carefully named his sources and treated his fictional material much as the author of Godeffroy of Boloyne handled the historical accounts of the Crusade. The assembling of material, the importance of individual elements in a new context, and the proportion of parts to the whole produced an effect that owed as much to the process of reorganization as it did to the separate sources. However, the redactor of Charles the Grete failed to metamorphose his inherited material into a thematically coherent account; he was content to present events and characters in separate contexts as he found them in his sources. The earlier black-and-white moral judgments (Christians are good, Saracens are bad, but only God can tell the difference between them) are retained, and so is a crude, uncourtly representation of love; the chance for thematic complexity provided by Floripas' conflict of loyalties and Ganelon's betrayal are left unexploited, or are poorly integrated into the work as a whole.

It is difficult to recognize immediately that Malory was engaged in the same process of reductive compilation as this pedestrian author

of Charles the Grete. In fact, both writers were reworking earlier romance material according to a general pattern of the period--and what is more, Malory resembles this redactor even in his tendency to simplify both narrative and theme, as well as to reiterate the same straightforward assessment of character and events. This simplification, which in Malory has the advantage of giving his work consistency and the effect of an ironic and mournful refrain, allows Malory to achieve, as the Charles author does not, a work of elegance and purpose. Malory does so, nevertheless, at the cost of reducing the subtle thematic balance of his French sources to a less delicate, if no less convincing, view of the world.[30]

English translation of French romances, begun slowly in the thirteenth century, was accelerated during the following two hundred years. These English versions tended to dissociate from the French cyclical organization, and remained a large but amorphous collection of self-contained stories. Together with the late medieval phase of cyclical reduction and simplification, this pattern of fragmentary transference into English meant that the "metastructure" characteristic of French romance after 1200 was never an element of English romance. Caxton's Four Sonnes of Aymon is one of these independent stories: originally associated with the Charlemagne cycle, it appeared in translation as a separate romance in several literatures derivative of the French tradition.[31]

Not only fragments of cyclical material, but also numerous later stories imitative of romance conventions and style became part of the English romance tradition by means of translation. Examples among Caxton's editions are Paris and Vienne and Blanchardyn and Eglantyne, which

represent a degraded phase of the genre: characterizations are simplistic, and the preoccupations they illustrate are more related to those of the commercial middle class than of traditional poetic romance.[32]

To the large group of English romance translations circulating in the fifteenth century were added a number of native English romances. Where these do more than simply imitate French romance motifs, or impress local legends and customs into a conventional narrative structure, they illustrate some important differences in attitude and a distinct evolution from later phases of French romance. In a word, they reflect the process of adaptation that we have examined in a general way as the development of a separate English literary tradition.[33] The alliterative Morte Arthure adapts Arthurian romance to elements of form and theme inherited from heroic pre-Conquest poetry. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight perfectly adapts French romance themes to a conception of the hero's isolation from society that is far more explicit and that contains more tragic implications than is present in, for example, Chrétien's Yvain or Perceval. A sense of futility which runs counter to the basic optimism of the genre is apparent in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde: moral values remain in question while the leading characters simply recede and finally disappear. Malory succeeded in capturing and interpreting these tendencies peculiar to English romance: the revival of older heroism, and the exploitation of certain tragic possibilities implicit in the romance genre.[34]

By including Chaucer and Malory in his choice of romances destined for publication, Caxton placed these English writers with his own romance translations as indicative of the taste for secular literature in his own time. By considering Caxton's choice of texts as represen-

tative, we may see the context in which the late medieval romance genre was developed. This context is important because, contrary to the impression given in many manuals of English literary history, Malory did not write in a literary or cultural vacuum, a last and lonely exponent of the old ideal. He may have been, indeed, one of the last serious advocates of chivalry, but he was certainly not alone. Instead, Malory was one of many romance writers who have since been forgotten, but of whom Caxton's canon is indicative. And far from being an original departure within the romance genre, Malory's Arthuriad is a compound of contemporary tendencies towards compression and simplification of narrative structure, and the growing awareness of historical processes.

NOTES

1. See chapter IV.

2. Bibliothèque prototypographique, ou Librairies des fils du roi Jean, ed. Jean Barrois (Paris: Treuffel and Wurtz, 1830), passim; Blake, Caxton and his World, pp. 67-70; Jacquot, "Les Lettres françaises en Angleterre à la fin du XVe siècle", in La Renaissance dans les provinces du nord, ed. Lesure, pp. 71-89.

3. Gordon, The Movement of English Prose, pp. 64-65, and Matthews, Later Medieval English Prose, p. 4, give the proportion of translation to composition in English as three to one, while Workman, Fifteenth-century Translation as an Influence on English Prose, pp. 32, 60-67, estimates that eight per cent of printed books during this period were translations, mostly from French. In estimating the proportion of translation as two to one, I have averaged the evidence of Caxton's press from the list given in Blake, Caxton and his World, pp. 224-239, with these estimates. I have preferred to be conservative, since neither Gordon nor Matthews supports his statements, and Workman's figure is based on printed texts only. See also H. S. Bennett, "The Production and Dissemination of Vernacular Manuscripts in the Fifteenth Century", The Library (fifth series) I (1946-47), pp. 167-178.

4. During the fourteenth century, verse romances such as Horn Child, Havelok the Dane, William of Palerne and the alliterative Morte Arthure appeared as versions of French romance; as well, there were original verse romances by Chaucer and the Pearl Poet. In the fifteenth century, with a few exceptions such as Lydgate and Skelton, octosyllabic romances were either converted into stanzaic versions, even transformed into ballads (for example, the stanzaic Morte Arthur and "Thomas Rhymer", Child no. 37) or they were written in prose (for example, Malory's Morte Darthur, Caxton's translations and the Cambridge prose Merlin). See the introduction, as well as the texts of Middle English Romances, ed. A. C. Gibbs (London: Arnold, 1966) and The Beginnings of English Literature, ed. Renwick and Orton, pp. 349-388.

5. Higden, Polychronicon, ed. Babington, I, 394-430. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, pp. 148-154, maintains that until the Renaissance there was no real differentiation between verse and "artistic" prose, that both were species of "eloquentia". Some sort of division seems to have been made at the time, however; although the twelfth century considered both poetry and prose to be forms of rhetoric, there was a separation of ars poetica and ars dictaminis. John of Salisbury also makes the following distinction in the Metalogicon (854 C): "[The] appeal of discourse is either in precision, that is, in the nice adjustment of adjective or verb to noun, or in imagery, that is, in passing by comparison from one sense to another..." This passage is cited by Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic to 1400, p. 162. By the fifteenth century, our present distinction appears to have evolved: see Trevisa's preface

to his translation of the Polychronicon, in Fifteenth-century Prose and Verse, ed. Alfred W. Pollard (New York: Dutton, n.d.), pp. 203-210 (not included in the Babington edition), and James Murphy, "A Fifteenth-century Treatise on Prose Style", Newberry Library Bulletin VI (1966), 205-210, a commentary on Thomas Merke's De moderno dictamine (1406).

6. Workman, Fifteenth-century Translation as an Influence on English Prose, is the major study in this area; see also Jacquot, "Les Lettres françaises en Angleterre à la fin du XVe siècle" in La Renaissance dans les provinces du nord, ed. Lesure, pp. 71-89, and H. S. Bennett, "Fifteenth-century Secular Prose", Review of English Studies XXI (1945), 257-263. Close studies of fifteenth-century translation include Elizabeth Williams, "Lanval and Sir Landevale: a medieval translator and his methods", Leeds Studies in English (new series) III (1970), 85-99, and Patricia Gathercole, "Fifteenth-century Translation: the development of Laurent de Premierfait", Modern Language Quarterly XXI (1960), 365-370. Cf. T. S. Eliot, "Seneca in Elizabethan Translation", in Selected Essays, third ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1951), pp. 65-105; and Zuber, Les "Belles infidèles, passim, for accounts of similar influences of translation on contemporary language and style.

7. Les Arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle, ed. Edmond Faral (Paris: Champion, 1924) presents the most influential of the medieval poetriae. These works concentrate on the rhetorical "colores" or ornaments rather than on the general or grammatical structures of the argument. In the Metalogicon, John of Salisbury similarly limits rhetoric to a discussion of ornament, and transfers principles of compositional organization to his consideration of grammar and dialectic, just as Alain de Lisle, forty years later in the Anticlaudianus (1200), considered rhetoric to be the jewelled decoration rather than the structure or organization of discourse. See J.W.H. Atkins, English Literary Criticism: the medieval phase (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943), pp. 4-16,72-93; and Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic to 1400, pp. 171-173,181-182; also R. McKeon, "Rhetoric in the Middle Ages", Speculum XVII (1942) 1-32; and E.F. Jacob , "Florida verborum venustas", John Rylands Library Bulletin XVII (1933), 264-290. That the Artes were known if not always respected through the late medieval period is evidenced by fifteenth-century works such as Merke's De moderno dictamine and Caxton's edition of an Italian Nova rhetorica (Margarita eloquentiae), and by their influence on many manuals published in the sixteenth century. See A Handbook to Sixteenth-century Rhetoric, ed. Lee A. Sonnino (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968).

8. Matthews, Later Medieval English Prose, pp. 9,19; Workman, Fifteenth-century Translation as an Influence on English Prose, pp. 34,66-67,74,9: "Not all the stylistic traits of the Latin have been transferred to the French, but all of the traits of the French are to be accounted for by their presence in Latin." James Sutherland, On English Prose (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), pp. 5-16, discusses the difficulties of writing in prose during this

period, and attributes the problem, as does Georges Doutrepont, Les Mises en prose des épopées et des romans chevaleresques du XIVe au XVIe siècle (1939: Geneva: Slatkine reprint, 1969), pp. 380-396, to the shift from a group audience to a solitary reader, from public oratory to private discussion. Certainly Brunetto Latini, Tresor (1230-1245) points out the greater freedom of prose from conventional patterns: "...la voie de prose est large et pleiere, si comme est ore la commune parleure des gens; mais li sentiers de rime est plus estroiz et plus fors." This passage is cited in Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic to 1400, p. 179. The difficulty of such freedom was an inability on the part of many writers to consider composition in larger units than the phrase. See Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic to 1400, pp. 193-196.

9. Workman, Fifteenth-century Translation as an Influence on English Prose, pp. 3-5,37; Matthews, Later Medieval English Prose, pp. 8-12; Atkins, English Literary Criticism: the medieval phase, p. 99; Caxton, The Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, passim. See also A. T. P. Byles, "William Caxton as a Man of Letters", The Library (fourth series) XV (1934), 1-25, and Byles' introduction to Caxton, The Ordre of Chyualry, ed. Byles, EETS(OS) 168 (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), pp. xi-l.

10. Matthiessen, Translation: an Elizabethan art; and also C. H. Conley, The First English Translators of the Classics (1927: Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1967). Tudor prose translators included Nicholas Grimald (Cicero, 1553), Hoby (Castiglione, 1561), and Sir Thomas North (Plutarch, 1579, from Amyot's French version).

11. Higden, Polychronicon, ed. Babinton, I, 1-2. Cf. Trevisa's earlier translation (1385).

12. There were three stylistic levels, defined according to the dignity of the person addressed, distinctions which were derived, supposedly, from Virgil's example. "Et tales recipiunt appellationes [styli] ratione personarum vel rerum de quibus fit tractatus. Quando enim de generalibus personis vel rebus tractatur, tunc est stylus grandiloquus; quando de humilibus, humilis, quando de mediocribus, mediocris." This passage is cited by Geoffrey of Vinsauf, Documentum de modo et arte dictandi et versificandi, ed. Roger Parr (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1968) III/145, p. 88. The low style was plain, the "mediocris" a mixed style, and the high style an occasion for all the ornamental battery of rhetorical devices that a writer could muster. Geoffrey goes on to describe the faults of each style: of the high style, bombast; of the middle style, looseness and uncertainty; and of the low style, dullness. Cf. Les Arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle, ed. Faral, pp. 86-89; also Norman Davis, "Styles in English Prose of the Late Middle and Early Modern Period", Langue et littérature XXI (1961), 165-184.

13. Caxton, Paris and Vienne, ed. MacEdward Leach, EETS(OS) 234 (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 45,96.

14. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, pp. 75,148, 353: from the art of writing letters ("ars dictaminis") came the first distinctly medieval consciousness of rhetoric. Cf. Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic, pp. 208 ff. and the Paston, Cely and Stonor letter collections. For the lay public, then as now, letter-writing provided the most frequent and often the only medium of written self-expression. As for Caxton, he must have been familiar with contemporary conventions of correspondence in his business dealings as a mercer. See Blake, Caxton and his World, pp. 34-39.

15. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 1091-1092. See chapter VI.

16. Prose Merlin, ed. Henry B. Wheatley, 2 vols., EETS(OS) 10,21,36,112 (London: Kegan Paul, 1899), I, 101.

17. Merlin: roman en prose du XIIIe siècle (Huth MS), ed. Gaston Paris and Jacob Ulrich, 2 vols. (Paris: Didot, 1886), I, 138-139.

18. See chapter VI.

19. Chevalier de la Tour-Landry, Le Livre...pour l'enseignement de ses filles, ed. Anatole de Montaiglon (Paris: Jannet, 1854), pp. 289-290; Caxton, The Book of the Knight of the Tower, ed. M. Y. Offord EETS(SS) 2 (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 190-191.

20. Workman, Fifteenth-century Translation as an Influence on English Prose, passim; N. F. Blake, "Word Borrowings in Caxton's Original Writings", English Language Notes VI (1968), 87-90, and Caxton and his World, pp. 125-150. Cf. a comment by Coleridge that "... prose must have struck men with greater admiration than poetry. In the latter, it was a language of passion and emotion; it was what they themselves spoke and heard in moments of exultation, indignation, etc. But to have an evolving roll, or a succession of leaves, talk continuously the language of deliberate reason, in a form of continued preconception, of a 'Z' already possessed when 'A' is being uttered--this must have appeared god-like." This passage is cited from Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism, ed. T. M. Raysor (London: Constable, 1936), pp. 226-227.

21. N. F. Blake, "William Caxton: his choice of texts", Anglia LXXXIII (1965), 289-307.

22. See chapters III and IV.

23. English historical chronicles were continuous throughout the medieval period: the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle was kept at various centres until the twelfth century, followed by Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia regnum Britanniae and its derivative vernacular versions, Wace's Brut, Layamon's Brut and the Estoire des Engles. In the thirteenth century, Robert of Gloucester's Rhymed Chronicle continued the tradition, as did Robert Mannyng's Chronicle and Higden's Polychronicon in the fourteenth century. In the next hundred years, Barbour, Capgrave and Caxton, as well as anonymous town chroniclers

continued earlier histories and added contemporary eye-witness accounts . See Kingsford, English Historical Literature, and cf. the Choix de chroniques et mémoires, ed. Buchon.

24. Cf. histories of Alexander, Arthur, Charlemagne, Havelok the Dane, Richard Coeur-de-lion and Robert Bruce, all of which have perhaps a grain of truth, but are conceived as romantic fictions. Cf. also the biographical fictions accompanying troubadour lyrics such as those of the Châtelain de Couci. In the sixteenth century, Shakespeare's play cycle of the Wars of the Roses demonstrates the same process of translating historical events into literary plots.

25. In his Speculum doctrinale (1250), Vincent of Beauvais indicates the relationship of historical events to artistic fiction: "Poetry has seven species: commedia, tragedia, invectio, satyra, fabula, historia, argumentum....The function, then, of the poet is in this, that with a certain beauty, he converts actual events into other species by his slanting figures." This passage is cited in Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic to 1400, pp. 175-176. See also Auerbach, Mimesis, pp. 132-134; and Scholes and Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative, pp. 40-44,80-89.

26. Roman d'Eneas, ed. J.-J. Salverde de Grave, 2 vols. (Paris: Champion, 1966/1968); Caxton, Eneydos, ed. W. T. Culley and F. J. Furnivall, EETS(ES) 57 (London: Trubner, 1890). See also E. Vinaver, The Rise of Romance (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 22-25; Ker, Medieval English Literature, pp. 71-74; and Middle English Romances, ed. Gibbs, pp. 4-14. For general studies of romance, see Gillian Beer, The Romance (London: Methuen, 1970), and J. E. Stevens, Medieval Romance: themes and approaches (London: Hutchinson, 1973).

27. Caxton, The History of Jason (text), ed. John Munro, EETS(ES) 111 (London: Oxford University Press, 1912); and Georges Doutrepont, La Littérature française à la cour des ducs de Bourgogne (1909: Geneva: Slatkine reprint, 1970), pp. 147-171.

28. See chapter VIII.

29. Caxton, Charles the Grete, ed. S. J. Herritage, EETS(ES) 37 (London: Trubner, 1880), pp. 26-29.

30. See chapter VII.

31. Caxton, The Four Sonnes of Aymon, ed. O. Richardson, EETS(ES) 44,45 (London: Trubner, 1885). English translations of the Charlemagne cycle have been edited in the EETS Extra Series 34-41,43-45,50. They are independent stories rather than "branches" as in the French cycle. "Metastructure", the term used here to describe the cyclical organization of which the "branches" are at once parts and derived, self-contained stories, is my own for want of an established critical term. See Robert W. Ackerman, "English Rimed and Prose Romances", in Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages, ed. R. S. Loomis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), pp. 480-519.

32. Cedric L. Pickford, "Miscellaneous French Prose Romances", in Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages, ed. Loomis, pp. 348-357.

33. See chapter IV.

34. Morte Arture, ed. John Finlayson (London: Arnold, 1957); Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, ed. J. R. R. Tolkien and E. V. Gordon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925); Chaucer, Troilus and Criseyde, in Complete Works, ed. Robinson, pp. 389-479. For a discussion of Malory's adaptation of French romance and inclusion of these elements, see chapter VII.

CHAPTER VI: MALORY'S TRANSLATION OF THE FRENCH ARTHURIAD

As a translation, the Morte Darthur represents a high degree of success; so successful is it, in fact, that several critics consider it tacitly or deliberately as an original work.[1] We have seen how Caxton and other fifteenth-century translators were limited to the phrase as their working unit, and how, as a result, they reproduced the original text word for word until difficulties of syntax, or the wish to innovate, however modest, made them resort to paraphrase. But Malory was more accomplished than most of his contemporaries: he translated not only word for word, phrase by phrase, but also in terms of complete passages and episodes. Malory's ability for large-scale paraphrase allowed him to adapt his material so that it would reflect his own thematic preoccupations.[2]

What is remarkable about Malory's work is not, however, that it marks an evolution from close translation to an increasing proportion of original departures from his source material. Surprisingly enough, the Morte Darthur reveals an evolution in the opposite direction, that of progressively fewer additional comments yet, at the same time, of a more controlled and independent redaction of his sources.

We may distinguish three approaches to translation in Malory's work. The Morte Darthur contains long passages of apparently word-for-word translation, in which there occur paraphrases and occasional additions or omissions that extend from a phrase to a few sentences in

length.[3] This approach is dominant especially in the first tales--"The Tale of King Arthur", "Arthur and the Emperor Lucius", and "The Tale of Sir Launcelot du Lake", according to Vinaver's division of the book. But in the course of "The Tale of Sir Tristrem of Lyones", there is a shift to a more dramatic pattern of omission and recasting of the episodes that are retained. This new approach is extended to a compilation of two or more sources in the last tales--"The Tale of Launcelot and Guinivere", and "The Death of Arthur".

In all three of these approaches, Malory's translation reflects the process of reduction that characterized late medieval romance. The tendency of French romance narrative to form into cycles had begun at the end of the twelfth century, when sequels were added to Chrétien's unfinished Lancelot and Perceval; episodes were subsequently introduced to explain motifs and events, and these were integrated by establishing an "interlace" sequence of narration.[4] This process, to which I referred briefly in dealing with Caxton's translations and which I shall discuss in more detail below,[5] was a combination of two important rhetorical devices:"amplificatio", by which the work was expanded and elaborated, and "abbreviatio", by which it was compressed and given a varied emphasis, in a way similar to that of chiaroscuro in the visual arts. The two methods were employed simultaneously to create the "interlace" sequence within the biographical framework of the cycle.[6] Since Malory's place in the evolution of this cyclical process will be considered in another chapter, it is enough to remark here the fact that he worked within this tradition, and that there are structural parallels to the Morte Darthur in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century romance.

The most cursory examination of Malory's French sources reveals

the extent to which he abridged his inherited material, both French and English. The Vulgate Lancelot, one "branche" of five in the cycle, is alone longer than the entire Morte Darthur. Even so, Malory translated a considerable amount of his book phrase by phrase, especially in the early tales. He shared with other fifteenth-century English translators a concern and ability to find idiomatic and poetic equivalents in English. Here are some examples:

> [Le roi Artus] fu si soillez de sanc e de cervelle que jamais par nul home ne fust reconus par nule de ses armes.
>
> And kynge Arthure was so blody that by his shylde there myght no man know hym, for all was blode and brayne that stake on his swerde and on his shylde.
>
> ...jovene enfant...sour une povre jument...
>
> ...a fayre yonge man...rydynge uppon a lene mare...
>
> Et lors traient les espees trenchans & sentredonnent grans cops si quil sentreblecent moult durement. & sentrefont petites plaies & grans. si dure li premiers assaus tant que se li grant cheualiers ne fust si legiers de quoer comme il estoit a la grant plenté de sanc quil ot perdu mors fust & danui & del trauail sans recourir. quar lancelot lauoit tant haste que nus nen peust auoir tant soffert. Si se trauelle tant lancelot del requerre & cil del desfendre quil sont amdoi si las. que a fine force les conuint reposer. Si se traient en sus li uns de lautre & sapoient sor les escus.
>
> And as sone as they myght they avoyded their horsys and toke their shyldys before them and drew oute their swerdys and com togydir egirly; and eyther gaff other many stronge strokys, for there myght nothir shyldis nother harneyse holde their strokes. And so within a whyle they had bothe many grymme woundys and bledde passyng grevously. Thus they fared two owres and more, trasyng and rasyng eyther othir where they myght hitte ony bare place. Than at the laste they were brethles bothe, and stoke lenyng on her swerdys. (7)

In the first example, Malory has maintained an alliteration of "s" and has also added a "b" repetition to replace the "s" lost in translation of "sanc et cervelle". Similarly, in the second passage, the repeated

"ov" sound in "jovene" and "povre", pointing up the contrast in meaning by a similarity in sound, is replaced by the rhyming "fayre" and "mare" with the "r" sound in "ryding" as a link. The English alliterative poetic tradition with which he was familiar, by working with the source of "King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius", for example,[8] would have made him sensitive to such repetitions of sound. The last example demonstrates Malory's occasional elaborations of his source material; the subject of this passage is one which often prompted him to add details of his own, such as "they avoyded their horsys and toke their shyldys before them" and "trasyng and rasyng...where they myght hitte ony bare place". The translation is not so much word for word as idiom for idiom, with attention to the sound and rhythm of English as well as to the sense. Vinaver has noted that Malory often translated the sound of the French word as much as its sense, as the "rive"/"river" equivalent in the passage below illustrates.[9] Thus Malory's translations range from literal equivalents, both of sense and sound, to paraphrase and minor additions.

We should remember, however, that Malory's achievement of a colloquial translation was not unique. Idiomatic transference had been a principle of English translators since John of Salisbury recognized that every language possessed its own idioms; the translator who ignored this fact was, he said, like a magpie attempting human speech.[10] Even Caxton was adept at finding equivalent idioms, although he would often lose the structure of the original in the process. On occasion, Malory like Caxton betrayed the sense of the original passage by translating too literally. Here are two examples:

> lors regardent (tout) contreual la riue & voient venir vne damoisele sor .j. palefroi qui venoit uers els grant aleure

> So therewith the kynge and all had aspyed com rydynge downe the ryver a lady on a whyght palferey a grete paace towarde them.
>
> ...moult seroit fols & nices qui ces flors lairoit perir por cest fust pouri secoure. Garde se tu vois tele auenture auenir que tu ne laisses mie les flors (perir) por le fust porri secorre.
>
> "Sholde nat he do grete foly that wolde lette ther two floures perishe for to succore the rottyn tre that hyt felle nat to the erthe?"--"Sir," seyde [Bors], "hit semyth me that thys wood myght nat avayle."--"Now kepe the," seyde the good man, "that thou never se such adventure befalle the." (11)

But unlike Caxton, confusion arising from this literal translation is rare in Malory's work, for in concentrating on the meaning of the whole episode, and of long passages within it, he was able to imagine the action of a given passage even if occasionally he misread separate words and phrases of the original. Malory virtually never repeated a fragmentary phrase or sentence construction to the detriment of its sense in English, although he might misconstrue his source and thus reconstruct the phrase or passage to produce a new meaning. Hence the "tout" of the first example above is transferred from the phrase "contreual la riue" to the subject "kynge", as "riue" becomes "ryver", but the English version still makes sense--although a different sense, in the matter of detail, from the source. Similarly, the conditional clause "se tu vois" in the second example is transformed into its literal opposite, "kepe the...that thou never se", probably by the similar sound of "se" (if) and "se" (see); yet the meaning of the whole passage, by virtue of its reconstruction, is not markedly changed.[12] Because his attention went beyond the single phrase unit, Malory could concentrate on finding new syntactical patterns to express the thought of his sources, and in this way, he could also exploit to full advantage the vocabulary and syntax

that were native to and characteristic of English in his time.

Malory's overall tendency was to compress, to render his source material more concisely, but because he was able to paraphrase, he could also expand his original, to dwell on an event or idea which had been merely suggested in the source. An example of his "abbreviatio", or compression, is the following passage from "The Tale of King Arthur":

Et quant la damoisele fu issue de sa chambre, cele qui l'espee aportoit, Morgue li dist: "Or cha l'espee, si savras comment Morgue set ferir." Et celle li baille toute tramblant, et elle la traist dou fuerre, si le voit clere et reluisant. Et lors s'en vait viers le lit et dist a la damoisele: "Or vien avant, si verras fille de roi ferir d'espee." Et quant Yvains voit que la chose est a che venue que sa mere veult toutes voies occhire son pere il li crie: "Ha feme maleuree et plainne de dyable et d'anemi, sueffre toi" Lors saut par dessus le lit et li oste l'espee de la main et li dist moult courechiés et moult dolans: "Certes, se vous ne fussiés ma mere mar l'eussiés baillie l'espee car ja mais après ceste ne baillissiés autre, ains en morussiés maintenant; et vous l'avés deservi, car vous estes la plus desloiaus chose que onques je veisse, qui volés occhirre en dormant vostre signour espousé, le plus loial et le plus preudomme que je sache el roiame de Logres. Voirement dient voir li chevalier de chest pais, qui dient que vous ne faites se dolour non et desloiauté, et ouvrés par art d'anemi en toutes les choses que vous faites. Certes bien a dyables part en vous et bien vous ont li anemi enlachiet, qui de ceste desloiauté faire vous estiés apparellie. Bien en eussiés deservi mort et vilainne, se il fust qui vous i mesist." Lors remet l'espee en son fuerre et giete tout en un vregiet ensamble, si loing

Anone the damsell brought the quene the swerde with quakyng hondis. And lyghtly she toke the swerde and pullyd hit oute and went boldely unto the beddis syde and awated how and where she myght sle hym beste. And And as she hevyd up the swerde to smyte, sir Uwayne lepte unto his modir and caught hir by the hone and seyde, "A fende, what wolt thou do?"

coume il onques puet, et commande tout au dyable. Puis redist a Morgain: "Certes, se vous ne fuissiés ma mere, je fesisse tant de vous qu'il en fust parlé a tous jors mais. Mais je non ferai, car je seroie perdus se vous occhesisse, et seroit trop grans folie se je m'arme perdoie pour un tel anemi coume vous estes, et anemis et dyables et desloiaus estes. Pour coi je devroie mieus estre apielés fieus de dyable comme Merlins, car nus ne vit onques que li peres de Merlin fust dyables, mais je vous ai veut et dyable et anemi droit. Et si fu en vous concheus et de vous issi, de quoi je puis de voir affremer que je sui mieus fieus de dyable que che ne soit Merlins." (13)

"A," seyde sir Uwayne, "men seyde that Merlyon was begotyn of a fende, but I may say an erthely fende bare me."

Malory has cut the French account to a third of its length by paraphrasing the action, eliminating the repetitions of the Merlin account in favour of terse and straightforward narration of the key event. He did not follow the expression of his source so much as imagine the scene being described, and transfer it, complete with small changes and added details ("quakyng hondis" instead of "toute tramblant", and "awayted how and where she myght sle hym beste"). As for Yvain's rhetorical reproaches, Malory reduced them to a short rejoinder which nevertheless captures, by its own rhythmical antithesis, the substance of Yvain's long speech in the brevity of an epigram.

Malory's techniques of "amplificatio" were not so finely developed nor so effective as his ability to condense and highlight his sources.[14] Usually he was content to add short comments that would clarify puzzling details and situations, or underline the nature of a given character.

> ...je ferai ouvrir la porte dou chastiel ou Ygerne est, et vous ferai entrer laieus, et girrés a li...
>
> This nyght ye shalle lye with Igrayne in the castel of Tyntigayll...But wayte ye make not many questions with her nor

> her men, but saye ye are diseased, and soo hye yow to bedde...
>
> "Sire," fait Merlins, "...il est bien raisons que vous aiiés des or mais feme."
>
> "Hit ys well done," seyde Merlyon, "that ye take a wyff, for a man of youre bounte and nobles sholde not be withoute a wyff." (15)

These short additions often give more colour and meaning to the inherited material; the second example in particular shows how Malory had imagined the scene of Igrayne's deception and had been led to add the word of caution that would protect the king's disguised identity.

But when he amplified by adding passages of more than a phrase or a few sentences in length, Malory fell back on the familiar style and conventional phrases of contemporary writing. His own style was a rhythmical parataxis, of which his French sources were also to a great extent composed. Admittedly, part of the charm of the Morte Darthur today is precisely this simple style of phrase strung onto phrase, its order determined by poetic cadence rather than by grammatical logic.[16] For telling a story, this style was adequate and flexible in most instances. But its limitations are apparent in the following passage of ex-persona commentary taken from "The Tale of Sir Tristrem of Lyones".

> For as bookis reporte, of sir Trystram cam all the good termys of venery and of huntynge, and all the syses and mesures of all blowyng wyth an horne; and of hym we had fyrst all the termys of hawkynge, and whyche were bestis of chace and bestis of venery, and whyche were vermyns, and all the blastis that longed to all maner of game: fyrste to the uncoupelynge, to the sekynge, to the fyndynge, to the rechace, to the flyght, to the deth and to strake; and many other blastis and termys, that all maner jauntylmen hat cause to the worldes end to prayse sir Trystram and to pray for his soule. Amen, sayde sir Thomas Malleore. (17)

Parataxis leads to confusion between the "termys" and the "blastis", while the various horn calls begin "fyrste to the uncoupelynge" without

being followed by "then" or "secondly...thirdly". The final clause, "that all maner jauntylmen", relates vaguely to all of the previously mentioned "blastis and termys", but has no clear grammatical antecedent. Without the support of the more logical syntax of a French source text, Malory and other English writers of this period were apparently unable to construct the extended conditional and causal expressions that are indicative of a complex, hypotactic style.

Malory's simplest and most natural expansion was in passages of dialogue, which were direct reflections of colloquial language and the "middle" style. From a mere exchange of names, he developed, for example, the following passage.

> "Now what shall I calle you," seyde the knyght, "inasmuch as ye have my cousyn at youre desyre of youre queste?"
> "Sir, I shall telle you: my name ys kynge Pellynor, kynge of the Illis, and knyght of the Table Rounde."
> "Now am I glad," seyde the knyght, "that such a noble man sholde have the rule of my cousyn."
> "Now what ys youre name?" seyde kynge Pellynor. "I pray you telle me."
> "Sir, my name ys sir Meliot de Logurs, and thys lady my cousyn, hir name ys called Nyneve. And thys knyght that was in the other pavilion was my sworn brother, a passynge good knyght, and hys name ys Bryan of the Ilis, and he ys full lothe to do ony wronge or to fyght with ony man but if he be sore sought on."
> "Hit is mervayle," seyde kynge Pellynor, "he wolde nat have ado with me."
> "Sir, he woll nat have ado with no man but if hit be at hys requeste."
> "I pray you brynge hym to the courte one of these dayes," seyde kynge Pellynor.
> "Sir, we woll com togidirs."
> "Ye shall be wellcom," seyde kynge Pellynore, "to the courte of kynge Arthure, and ye shall be gretely alowed for youre commynge." (18)

Introductions, civilities, invitation and acceptance--such a conversation is simple to an extreme, and the phrases would have been readily available as familiar social conventions.

In considering Malory's translation by paraphrase, his addition of small details and his occasional pedestrian passages of greater length, his independence--the claim made for him that he is an original writer--appears to be seriously limited. Each new source determined to a great extent the syntactical constructions, the balance between narrative movement and description, and even the kind of vocabulary and poetic effect of its version in the Morte Darthur. It was only when Malory began to use one source with a critical eye on another that he could arrive at controlling his translation of whole episodes and achieve his own synthesis of story elements. We may observe a development of more independent manipulation of source material in the second half of "The Book of sir Trystrem of Lyones" and in "The Tale of the Sankgreall". This second approach to translation led to even greater control of source material in the last tales.

The translation of the Red City, Lonzep and Palomides sections of the "Tristrem" resulted in a close though idiomatic version which differs from its source only by the fact of occasional if lengthy omissions. Apart from these extensive cuts, Malory made very few changes and almost no additions. His treatment of the Grail quest was also limited almost entirely to "abbreviatio": he did not even modify the interlace pattern of his source in this instance, as he had done in other tales.[19] What might appear at first to be literal translation is actually an experiment in treatment of episodic units rather than phrases or passages, and beyond the episodes to a consideration of their sequence in his narrative continuum. By excision, Malory heightened the superficially senseless forest encounters of his three heroes (Tristrem, Launcelot, and Palomides) into a series of preliminary tests for the coming Grail quest,

the ultimate moral test of the Arthurian world. This is a new thematic interpretation of the later "Tristrem" sequence of episodes,[20] and Malory achieved it, not by added comments and details, but by his selective translation of the source. At this stage in his translation, Malory was beginning to clarify and emphasize themes which were only implicit in the French Vulgate cycle, by making his source material reflect those details and characteristics which, alone, satisfied his own conception of the Arthuriad. Such a general overview of source material had certainly never occurred to his contemporaries, and had probably not occurred to Malory himself before this point in his translation.

Malory's final approach to translation was more complex than the second; it was in effect the second approach--that of excision to emphasize certain elements over others--involving as well compilation from two sources instead of a single source. For his last two tales, "The Book of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere" and "The Morte Darthur saunz Guerdon", he drew on the Mort Artu, the fifth and last part of the Vulgate cycle, and the Morte Arthur, an earlier stanzaic version of the Mort Artu composed at the end of the fourteenth century. The following short passages, telling of Launcelot's escape to the Joyous Garde after he has rescued the queen from death at the stake, and has killed Gawain's two brothers, will show on a small scale Malory's third and highly successful approach to his sources.

> Atant se partent de leanz et chevauchent tant par leur jornees qu'il vindrent a quatre liues de la Joieuse Garde. Et lors i envoia Lancelos avant messages por dire qu'il venoit; et quant cil del chastel le sorent, si li vindrent a l'encontre ausi grant joie fesant com se ce fust Dex meïsmes, et le reçurent assez plus hautement qu'il ne feïssent le roi Artu; et quant il sorent qu'il volt leanz de-

morer et por coi il i estoit venuz, si li jurernt sur seinz qu'il li aideroient jusqu'a la mort. Lors manda Lancelos chevaliers del païs et il vindrent a grant plenté.

lancelot gonne with hysse folke forthe wende
with sory hert and drery mode;
to quenys and countesses fele he sende
and grete ladyes of gentill blode
that he had ofte here landis deffende
and foughten whan hem nede by-stode.
Ichone her power hym lende
and made hys party stiffe and goode.

quenys and countesses that Ryche were
send hym erlys with grete meyne;
other ladies that myght no more
sente hym barons or knyghtis free;
so mykelle folke to hym gon fare,
hydous it was his oste to see:
to the Ioyous gard wente he thare
and helde hym in that stronge Cyte.

And so he rode hys way wyth the quene, as the Freynshe booke seyth, unto the Joyous Garde, and there he kepte her as a noble knyght shulde. And many grete lordis and many noble knyghtes drew unto hym. Whan they harde that kynge Arthure and sir Launcelot were at debate many knyghtes were glade and many were sory of their debate. (21)

Here we may see in a short passage Malory's third technique, that of simultaneously adapting more than one source to produce a new version. This approach was a new balance of "abbreviatio" and "amplificatio":[22] it consisted of extensive reduction and combination of his sources, with occasional but important additions in the form of connecting passages and minimal commentary, such as the last sentence of the passage quoted above.

There is, even in this final approach, virtually no free invention; a passage in one or other of the sources has inevitably suggested the added detail or implied the theme. In the passage just quoted, Malory's statement "and many grete lordis...drew unto hym" echoes the French "Lors manda Lancelos chevaliers" and repeats the theme of voluntary aid

in the stanzaic Morte Arthur, "Ichone her power hym lende". Often Malory followed the direction of the English poem's "abbreviatio"; there is no mention, in this example, of the several days' journey to the Joyous Garde that had appeared in the French account. Malory further simplified his sources by eliminating much repetition (as we have seen even in his first tales) while still keeping their main point as his own. His third approach to translation, then, involved use of the Vulgate source as a base, together with reference to the English stanzaic Morte for guidance in his adaptive omissions and thematic emphasis.[23]

As with narratives, so with dialogue; Malory expanded many of the exchanges between characters, and transformed reported speech into direct dialogue. But unlike the insignificant conversation between Pellinor and Meliot quoted above, dialogues in the later tales were built on the ideas already expressed in the source material. The conversation between Launcelot at the Maid of Astolat may serve as an example.

"Sire, vos vos en alez, et del revenir est en aventure; et por ce que nus messages ne doit estre si bien creüz de la besoigne son seigneur comme li sires meïsmes, vos di le mien besoing qui tant est granz. Je vueill bien que vos sachiez veraiement que ge sui a la mort venue, se je n'en sui par vous ostee."--"A la mort, damoisele?" fet Lancelos, "ja certes ne morroiz por chose ou ge vos puisse aidier." Lors commence la damoisele trop durement a plorer; si dist a Lancelot: "Certes, sire, ge vos puis bien dire que mar vos vi onques."--"Por quoi, damoisele?" fet Lancelos, "dites le moi." --"Sire," fet ele, "si tost com ge vos vi, ge vos amai outre ce que cuers de fame peüst home amer, car onques puis ne poi ne boivre ne mengier, ne dormir ne reposer,ençois

"My lorde, sir Launcelot, now I se ye woll departe from me. Now fayre knyght and curtayse knyght," seyde she, "have mercy uppon me, and suffir me nat to dye for youre love."--"Why, what wolde ye that I dud?" seyde sir Launcelot. "Sir, I wolde have you to my husbande," seyde Elayne. "Fayre damsell, I thanke you hartely," seyde sir Launcelot, "but truly," seyde he, "I caste me never to be a weddid man."--"Than fayre knyght," seyde she, "woll ye be my paramour?"--"Jesu deffende me!" seyde sir Launcelot, "for that I rewarded youre fadir and youre brothir full evyll for their grete goodnesse."

ai puis traveillié jusques ci en pensee et toute dolour et toute mesaventure soufferte de nuit et de jour."--"Ce fu folie," fet Lancelos, "de baer a moi en tel maniere, meïsmement puis que ge vos dis que mes cuers n'estoit mie a moi, et que, se g'en peüsse fere ma volenté, je m'en tenisse a beneüré, se tel damoisele com vos estes me daignast amer; et des icele eure ne deüssiez vos baer a moi, car vos poiez bien connoistre que ge vouloie dire partex paroles que ge n'ameroie ne vos ne autre, fors cele ou ge avoie mon cuer mis."

"Alas! than," seyde she, "I muste dye for youre love."

"Ye shall nat do so," seyde sir Launcelot, "for wyte you well, fayre maiden, I myght have bene maryd and I had wolde, but I never applyed me yett to be maryd.

But bycause, fayre damesell, that ye love me as ye sey ye do, I woll for youre good wylle and kyndnes shew to you som goodnesse. That ys thys, that wheresomever ye woll besette youre herte uppon som good knyght that woll wedde you, I shall gyff you togydirs a thousand pounde yerely, to you and to youre ayris. This muche woll I gyff you, fayre mayden, for youre kyndenesse and allwayes whyle I lyve to be youre owne knyght."

"Ha! sire," fet la damoisele, "ne trouverai ge autre conseill en vos de ceste mescheance?"--"Certes, damoisele," fet Lancelos, "nenil, car ge nel porroie amender ne por mort ne por vie."--"Sire," fet ele ce poise moi; et sachiez bien que g'en sui a la mort venue, et par mort departira mes cuers de vostre amor."

"Sir, of all thys," seyde the mayden, "I woll none, for but yff ye woll wedde me other to be my paramour at the leste, wyte you well, sir Launcelot, my good dayes ar done." (24)

It is evident from this passage that, while Malory has modified his source by paraphrase and amplification to achieve a new tone and interpretation of character, he has neverthless relied on the Mort Artu to give him the subject and movement of such a dialogue. Once he was able to seize the direction of his source or sources, he was free to adapt and expand within this direction. But neither here nor elsewhere did he

interject a passage whose conception was independent of his source, with any more success than, as we have seen, in the commentary on hunting terms or the dialogue between Meliot and Pellinor.

One of Malory's most dramatic and effective passages is his description of Gawain's challenge to Launcelot in front of the city of Benwick. As he did throughout the last two tales, Malory drew on his sources, either alternately or simultaneously, blending by means of paraphrase his English and French material, to which he added transitions and occasional comments and details. For the episode of Gawain's challenge, Malory again based his version on the Mort Artu and used the stanzaic Morte as a guide in abbreviating the French account. The result is an incisively condensed version of the episode: direct speech between Launcelot and Gawain replaces the reported messages, repetition is avoided, and the action is quickened by being relieved of legalistic discussion.[25] Malory's main contribution to his new version was an ironic insistence on the opposition between speech and action.

> Than they hylde their langage...and uppon the morning early ...they saw the cite of Benwick besieged round about... "Where arte thou now, false traytor sir Launcelot?..." And all thys langayge harde sir Launcelot every deale...Than sir Gawayne seyde unto sir Launcelotte, "And thou darste do batayle, leve thy babelynge and com off, and lat us ease oure hartis!" (26)

The speech/action motif is echoed in the next episode: Guinevere deceives Mordred and refuses to yield to him "for fayre speache nother for foule."

By means of a balance of "abbreviatio" and "amplificatio", Malory was able to arrive at a version of his sources that, taken as a whole, was different from and essentially independent of any one of them. At the same time, however, he never strayed far from either the literal or

the conceptual directions that his source material suggested. His achievement was one of tone and emphasis rather than one of invention, even within single episodes. We may therefore consider Malory's literary contribution to be not that of an original writer, whose additions and extensive modifications would outweigh and transform the story elements of an earlier narrative, as for example, Chaucer changed the Filostrato in composing his Troilus and Criseyde, but that of a translator, who did no more nor less than reveal, in terms which still impress and move us, the inevitable outcome of a direction already implicit in his sources.[27]

NOTES

1. From his first contribution to Malory studies in 1925 to his most recent essay, published five years ago, Eugène Vinaver has increasingly stressed the importance of Malory's departures from and modifications of his French sources. See Le Roman de Tristan dans l'oeuvre de Thomas Malory (1925), Malory (1929), the commentary to Malory, Works (1947/1967), pp. 1263-1663, and The Rise of Romance (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 123-139. Lewis, "The English Prose Morte", and D. S. Brewer, " 'the hoole book' ", both in Essays on Malory, ed. Bennett, pp. 24-25,42,53, appear to consider the Morte Darthur as an adaptive translation. But "the united professors of America" (as Brewer calls the critics who have collaborated to produce Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky) have insisted strongly on Malory's independence of his sources, stressing his "unified intention", "purpose", "scheme", the "pre-conceived plan" by which the English version was transformed into an "original" creation. See Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, pp. 120,187,205, 207. Unfortunately, criticism of this sort may be faulted as "intentionalist fallacy", especially since these same critics will admit that Malory was not always capable of realizing the intentions they attribute to him. D. S. Brewer, "The Present Study of Malory", in Arthurian Romance, ed. D. R. R. Owen (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1970), pp. 90-91, describes the most recent critical response to Malory as a tendency to move from romance (by which he, and Lewis, mean a delight in the irrational) to realism and consequently to fitting the Morte Darthur into the realist pattern of the nineteenth-century novel. Brewer cautions: "the word 'realism' is a very slippery one. The word is closely related to modern concepts of literature which are not directly applicable to older literature." Cf. the "hoole book" controversy and Vinaver's method of edition, discussed in chapter IX.

2. See chapter VII.

3. The French sources of the Morte Darthur have been reviewed by Vida L. Scudder, Le Morte Darthur of Thomas Malory: a study of the book and its sources (1921: New York: Haskell House reprint, 1965); by Vinaver, Le Roman de Tristan dans l'oeuvre de Thomas Malory, and the commentary to Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 1263-1663; as well as in monographs such as the study of the Tale of Balin by P. J. C. Field, "Description and Narration in Malory", Speculum XLIII (1968), 476-486. The authors of Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, refer to the sources of the Morte Darthur even though they claim that Malory handled his material with a consciously independent approach. See also R. H. Wilson, "Notes on Malory's Sources", Modern Language Notes LXVI (1951), 22-26. The key word in these discussions is the term "source", which implies a specifically derivative process of translation rather than the more generally derivative "analogue" or "influence" of one independent work on another.

4. The tendency of French romance to form into cycles is fully treated

in Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages, ed. Loomis, by the following contributors: A. W. Thompson, "Additions to Chrétien's Perceval", pp. 206-217; Pierre LeGentil, "The Work of Robert de Boron and the Didot Perceval", pp. 251-262; W. A. Nitze, "Perlesvaus", pp. 263-273; Jean Frappier, "The Vulgate Cycle", pp. 295-318; A. Micha, "The Vulgate Merlin", pp. 319-338; E. Vinaver, "The Prose Tristan", pp. 339-347. Earlier work is represented by Ferdinand Lot, Etude sur le Lancelot en prose (Paris: Champion, 1918), and Albert Pauphilet, Le Legs du moyen âge (Melun: D'Argences, 1950), pp. 180-209. A summary of the interrelationships of the thirteenth-century Arthurian cycles is given by Fanni Bogdanow, The Romance of the Grail (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1966), pp. 1-10.

5. See chapters V and VII.

6. William W. Ryding, Structure in Medieval Narrative (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), and Jane Baltzell, "Rhetorical 'Amplification' and 'Abbreviation' ande the Structure of Medieval Narrative", Pacific Coast Philology II (1967), 32-39. The term "entrelacement" (English: "interlace") seems to have first been used by Lot--see his Etude sur le Lancelot en prose, pp. 17 ff. Cf. Vinayer, The Rise of Romance, pp. 68-98, and the development of Gothic sculpture and painting as described by Hauser, The Social History of Art, I, 272: "The basic form of Gothic art is juxtaposition...the principle of expansion, not of concentration, of co-ordination, and not of subordination, of the open sequence and not of the closed geometric form..." This tendency in the visual arts would seem to parallel that of the Artes: Geoffrey of Vinsauf devoted most of his attention to methods and devices of "amplificatio". See Les Arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle, ed. Faral, pp. 203-257, and the Documentum de arte dictandi et versificandi, ed. and tr. Parr, pp. 45-84. For other contemporary examples, see Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic to 1400, pp. 188-189. These comparisons between visual, plastic and literary media should only be made with the following reservation, however: that as the media are different so are the expressions which they permit and the developments which they follow. See F. P. Pickering, Literature and Art in the Middle Ages (London: Macmillan, 1970), pp. 3-63. By Pickering's rule, Vinaver's anachronicstic comparison of twelfth- and thirteenth-century romance with early medieval Celtic interlace designs is not acceptable (The Rise of Romance). My use of the term "chiaroscuro" is used with Pickering's qualification in mind, to indicate a pattern of light and shade, emphasis and omission, that is superimposed on an already existing conformation of elements.

7. Suite du Merlin (Cambridge MS f. 223r, col. 2), cited in Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, p. 1293; The Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances, ed. H. Oskar Sommer, 8 vols. (Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1908-1916), V, 206 (MS B. M. Add. 10293); Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 34,99,266.

8. Morte Arthure, ed. Finlayson; Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver.

9. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 62,73,83,88,760,912,942,944, and Vinaver's comment, p. 1538. Related is the translation of a term in the French source by a sound-associated word: for example, p. 87, "vermeil" becomes "grene", because the first syllable must have suggested "vert" to Malory.

10. Atkins, English Literary Criticism: the medieval phase, p. 75.

11. The Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances, ed. Sommer, VI, 11, 133-134 (MS B. M. Add. 10294): cf. MS B. N. 120, f. 524r, quoted in Vinaver's commentary to Malory, Works, p. 1547, also pp. 863, 958.

12. Cf. the reconstruction of sense in the translation next quoted: "elle ta traist dou fuerre, si le voit clere et reluisant..." becomes "And lyghtly she toke the swerde, and pullyd hit oute..."

13. Merlin, ed. Paris and Ulrich, I, 110, and II, 213-214; Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 9, 149.

14. After the completion of the Roman de la rose by Jean de Meung and the dissemination of this anti-romantic conclusion in the literatures of Europe, "amplificatio" fell into disrepute as a literary technique: Chaucer satirized the "prolixitee" of contemporary romance in his "Tale of Sir Thopas" and spoke disparagingly of Geoffrey de Vinsauf in the "Nun's Priest's Prologue" in The Canterbury Tales. He also contrasted elaborate and plain styles in the "Franklin's Prologue". Complete Works, ed. Robinson, pp. 135, 164-167,204.

15. Merlin,ed. Paris and Ulrich, I, 110 and II, 60; Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 97,9.

16. Vinaver, Malory, pp. 105-108; M. M. Morgan, "A Treatise in Cadence", Modern Language Review XLVII (1952), 156-164; cf. Jean Rychner, "L'Attaque et la délimitation des phrases narratives dans la Mort Artu", in Mélanges de langue et de littérature...offerts à Jean Frappier, 2 vols. (Geneva: Droz, 1970), II, 973-986. As Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic to 1400, p. 218, comments, "...the large principle, fundamental in ancient writers [and continued in the "dictamens"] ...that sentence skill consists in composing rhythmical units in a total movement, i.e., in composing by heard clauses." See pp. 223 ff. of Baldwin for further discussion.

17. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 682-683,1510. Field, "Description and Narration in Malory", Speculum XLIII (1968), 478-480, notes that Malory found subordination difficult, while Sally Shaw, "Caxton and Malory", in Essays on Malory, ed. Bennett, pp. 138-142, compares even Caxton's ability to form hypotactic constructions favorably against Malory's. Sutherland, On English Prose, pp. 21 ff., concludes that "if the Morte Darthur is not quite a dead-end, its prose is the culmination of a simple narrative style and gives little promise of being able to deal with more abstruse matters."

18. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 116-117. Cf. also a conversation between Tristrem and Yseult, Gawain's challenge to Launcelot, and Elayne's speech, pp. 501-502,806,1189-1221.

19. Vinaver, Malory, pp. 29-42, and the Commentary, passim; also Wilson, "Notes on Malory's Sources", Modern Language Notes LXVI (1951), 22-26.

20. Charles Moorman, "The Tale of the Sankgreall: human frailty", in Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, pp. 191-192; see also Lewis, "The English Prose Morte", and P. E. Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte" in Essays on Malory, ed. Bennett, pp. 7,14-20,64-103.

21. La Mort le roi Artu, ed. Jean Frappier (Geneva: Droz, 1956), para. 97, pp. 126-127 (MS Arsenal 3347); Le Morte Arthur, ed. Samuel B. Hemingway (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1912), ll. 2030-2045, pp. 60-61; Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, p. 1178. Cf. Wilfred L. Guerin, "The Tale of the Death of Arthur: catastrophe and resolution", in Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, pp. 237-244,248-249.

22. Cf. the contemporary Arthurian compilation of Micheau Gonnot, MS B. N. 112, dated 1470, and also MS B. N. 116, as well as the printed edition of the prose Lancelot (1488), which are discussed in chapter VIII.

23. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 1585-1591; cf. R. M. Lumiansky, "The Tale of Lancelot and Guenevere: suspense", in Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, pp. 216-217,220-222.

24. Mort Artu, ed. Frappier, para. 57, pp. 67-68; Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 1089-1090.

25. Mort Artu, ed. Frappier, paras. 132-140, 144-158, pp. 169-175,181-204; Le Morte Arthur, ed. Hemingway, ll. 2404-2435,2866-2937, pp. 72-73,87-89; Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 1189-1191,1214-1221.

26. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 1216,1219,1220,1227,1230.

27. Although there is critical precedent for regarding Malory as a translator (see note 1 to this chapter), the lack of manuscript variants which may be claimed as specific sources prevents any more conclusive statement. The claim of Malory as a translator is justified, I think, by the evidence presented in this chapter. But I have deliberately avoided discussion of problematic episodes such as those of Sir Gareth and Sir Urry in "The Book of Sir Tristrem" and "The Tale of Launcelot and Guinevere", since no specific source nor even an acceptable analogue has been discovered for either of these sequences. Cf. P. E. Tucker, "A Source for the Healing of Sir Urry in the Morte Darthur", Modern Language Review L (1955), 490-492. On the other hand, where comparable French texts do exist, Malory's apparent dependence would seem to indicate that he translated the Gareth and Urry episodes from sources which have

since disappeared. Faced with the lack of conclusive documentary evidence, critical claims have ranged from conservative to radical adaption in the Morte Darthur as a whole. Even those critics which claim the greatest originality for Malory, however, all refer to Malory's French sources, so that even the most ambitious claims to originality and independence fall within the terminology of the translation process, as established in chapter II.

CHAPTER VII: MALORY'S ADAPTATION OF THE FRENCH ARTHURIAD

Although most of the alterations to his French sources consisted of omissions, some rearrangement, and additions that were rarely beyond a sentence in length, Malory marked these sources to a significant extent with the character of his own mind and his own time. Not only the prose style of the Morte Darthur, which reflects Malory's several techniques of translation and the contemporary evolution of English as a literary language, but also his conception of chivalry and the thematic import of the Morte have received much critical attention.

Concerning the thematic aspect of Malory's alterations, and his relatively extended additions (notably the ending to the Tor and Pellinor episode of the first tale, the ex-persona commentary "Lo ye all Englysshemen", and Bors' lament for Launcelot in the last tale), as well as a multitude of minor changes are cited to demonstrate that, whatever the stylistic unevenness and structural weakness of the work, its author was intent on presenting a consistent thematic overview of the rise and fall of chivalry, using motifs he inherited from the French Arthuriad.[1]

It is true that Malory reflected contemporary disillusion and uncertainty; like Caxton, he faulted his countrymen for their "new-fangill" shifts in loyalty.[2] But such direct and specific commentary is rare, and the Morte Darthur is, on the whole, more purely metaphorical. Critics agree that Malory had a conception of chivalry distinct from that

of his French sources; moreover, passages in the Morte can be isolated that apparently comment on conditions during the Wars of the Roses. But the Morte Darthur is as much or more a reflection of the tradition of French romance represented by his Vulgate sources.

The error of Malory's critics has been to overemphasize his thematic asides at the expense of a larger view of the Morte Darthur as a late phase of the romance genre. Moved by the simplicity and cadence of his prose, these critics have imagined the last two tales to reflect a realistic situation rather than a series of narrative motifs drawn from older romance. The accent has thus fallen on the tragic overtones implicit in these asides, and the Morte Darthur has been described generically as tragedy.

This classification is hard to demonstrate, however. Two factors are responsible for the difficulty: one is the lack of a single adequate theory of tragedy, and the other is the presence of non-tragic elements within the narrative structure.

The first difficulty, that of a lack of an adequate theory of tragedy, is apparent in the critics' contradictory reasoning as they attempt to define Malory's status as a tragic writer. The Morte's "tragic character is the sense of wasted potential"; "we have the sense that [the Grail sequence] is somehow profoundly connected with the final tragedy"; "the ultimate debate is not between Camelot and Corbenic...but... the familiar conflict between human love and loyalty";"the tragic fall of King Arthur's court is not the result of actions of individuals taken separately...rather it is the result of excesses of the whole chivalric system...in the end, Lancelot, Guenevere, Arthur, Gawain and Mordred are thus to be seen as merely figures in the tragedy, the whole of

which is infinitely greater than the sum of its parts"; "where the French is weak, Malory is strong. He so develops the sense of personal choice in his characters that the conception of Fate becomes almost superfluous"; "what will relieve the [Morte Darthur] of futility is the idea, urged by Malory, that even in the smoke of ruin the men and women involved understand what they have lost"; "Malory's book reflects a deeply tragic awareness of chivalry's failure to attain perfection... the heroes fall, but they fall in ignorance, and the 'dolorous death and departing' of the great court is accompanied by no upsurge of spirit and no illumination of self"; "it is the fall of an ideal society, the collapse of a dream much greater than the members of the Round Table themselves; it is a contrast between what the God-like in man can aspire to, and what his baser self can do...But...this tragedy occurs in the material world only, for part of its essence is that spirituality which permits man to envision and aspire"; "the final catastrophe was to [Malory] less a drama of Fate than a human drama determined from first to last by the clash of human loyalties."[3]

How does this contradictory reasoning arrive at a single conclusion, that the Morte Darthur is a tragedy? It appears that there is a consensus that Malory is a writer of tragedy, and the reasons why this is so seem to be supplied in retrospect. All of the modern critics of Malory are evidently moved by his effective style, and to praise this effect, they agree that the Morte's unhappy ending must contain the essence of the most sublime of the literary genres.

But if we apply successively various theories of tragedy to the Morte Darthur, we shall find that, although no one definition of tragedy seems to fully express our sense of what is tragic in a given work,

Malory's book satisfies none of these theories. Malory leads us beyond the tragic paradox to a reflection of the original romance impulse for survival; although there are tragic elements present within the work, the Morte Darthur is still fundamentally and ultimately romantic. And we may see that the thematic priorities of romance are as worthy of reflection and critical praise as those of tragedy.

There are three major theories of tragedy which should be considered with reference to the Morte Darthur. The first of these is the "classical" theory, exemplified by Sophocles and formulated by Aristotle in the Poetics.[4] Aristotelian definitions have dominated the views of those critics who see the Morte as a unified work in the modern sense, and who seek to justify its artistic merit in terms of beginning-middle-end unity. There are, according to this view, the elements of prophecy, recognition, "hubris" and suffering, as the action of the whole book takes its inevitable downward course. The disaster is precipitated by the characters' flawed virtue. The flaws are Launcelot's subservience to the queen (although humuilty is a virtue), Gawain's vengeance (although loyalty is a virtue), Arthur's hesitation and distress (although tolérance and magnanimity are virtues essential to a king), and Guinevere's jealousy (although her beauty is a courtly virtue and her justification). The strength of this society contains the germ of its fall, and the human greatness of the characters is simply an excess of the mean. Malory's work, by the criteria of the "classical" theory, is seen as a tragic action incited by the characters' failure to reach a mean of behaviour.[5]

But it is by no means certain that the Morte Darthur is a unified work in the Aristotelian sense.[6] Nor can the stark fatalism on which the Greek conception of tragedy depends be read into Malory. The complexity and inner debate that we now appreciate as an important element of narrative or drama is the result of a long post-classical tradition, derived from a Christian emphasis on motivation and its literary expression, first as Prudentius' "inner debate" of allegorical voices, and later as the self-searching monologues and dialogues of courtly love. Thus Aristotle's theory is not adequate to explain what is tragic in the Morte Darthur, nor can the Poetics, which were not widely known before the sixteenth century, be applied to Malory with historical justification.

The second conception of tragedy is medieval. Hardly a theory (it is more nearly the definition of a rhetorical mode), it appears in the Consolation of Philosophy, translated by Chaucer, as "a dite of prosperite for a tyme, that endeth in wreccidnesse".[7] Tragedy was considered, within the perspective of medieval thought, as a sorrow of the temporal world, which is subject to fortune and is inferior to the eternal world of God's justice. According to Boethius and Augustine, human life was ephemeral and subject to fate, bound to turn to both good and evil, and pictured as the image of Fortune's turning wheel. By contrast, God was unchanging, always present, and unfailingly just. Chaucer's Monk explains this conception in his prologue.

> I woll biwalle, in manere of tragedie
> The harm of hem that stoode in heigh degree
> And fillen so that ther nas no remedie
> To brynge hem out of hir adversitee,
> For certain, whan that Fortune list to flee,
> Ther may no man the cours of hire with-holde. (8)

For the wise the temporal cycle implicit in the wheel motif dissolves into the higher order of eternity. But those who complain of their bad luck are no more foolish than those who rejoice in their prosperity, for every man must die and return what fortune has lent him.[9] Medieval tragedy thus accentuates the sorrow and disillusion that man must suffer in his earthly life.

In the Morte Darthur, we may find evidence of this tragic outlook, notably in the motif appearing in Arthur's dream before his last battle ("the whyle turned up-so-downe and he felle amonge the serpentis"), in the fulfilment of Merlin's prophecy that the court would know prosperity, then adversity, in the fateful love of Launcelot for Guinevere, and finally in the curious resignation of the central characters just before their deaths. "Alas! who may truste thys world?" cries Launcelot when he hears of Arthur's death--Arthur, who had prided himself on being the centre (or the "hub", recalling the image of Fortune's wheel) of the Round Table fellowship, and who leaves the world saying to Bedivere, "Comforte thyselff...and do as well as thou mayste, for in me ys no truste for to trust in." Launcelot, still the servant of the queen, forsakes the world saying, "the selff desteny that ye have taken you to, I woll take me to, for the pleasure of Jesu."[10]

Except for all but the most determined of the Grail knights, however, resignation of the temporal life in anticipation of the life beyond is ambiguous. It is especially ambiguous for Launcelot, the greatest earthly knight, and the queen. Malory included a late interpolation of his source, the Mort Artu, which describes the lovers' last meeting, and even added a few phrases of his own. One of these addi-

tions is Launcelot's comment to Guinevere that

> ...in you I have had myn erthly joye, and yf I had founden you now so dysposed, I had caste me to have had you in myn owne royame. But sythen I fynde you thus desposed, I ensure you faythfully, I wyl ever take me to penaunce and praye whyle my lyf lasteth. (11)

So Launcelot joins Bedivere and Bors, and for six years they "redde in bookes...and range bellys", but the best earthly knight hardly becomes a saint: he has followed Guinevere to his hermit's life just as he had served her wishes in the world. Launcelot does not therefore resign himself from the world, according to the orthodox Christian pattern; the world instead rejects him, since he can no longer be a knight and lover. Although he dies as a saint would ("starke dede; and he laye as he had smyled and the swettest savour about hym"), his old companions do not rejoice in his saintlike death, but "the grettest dole they made that ever made men".[12]

Moreover, the medieval conception of tragedy does not account for the fact that the central characters assume more blame than their flaws, or faults, merit. They accuse themselves of the major sins of pride and lust which have been condemned throughout the book, but they remain unabsolved. Gawain is the first to confess that "thorow my wylfulnes I was causer of myne owne dethe...And thorow me and my pryde ye have all thys shame and disease". Guinevere accuses Launcelot of the same sin: "Thorow thys same man hath all thys warre be wrought and the deth of the moste nobelest knyghtes of the worlde..."[13] When Launcelot's unmeasured sorrow draws a reproof from a hermit, the knight replies:

> ...whan I remembre me how by my defaute and myn orgule and my pryde that [Arthur and Guinevere] were both layed ful lowe...this remembred, of their kyndenes and myn unkyndenes, sanke so to myn herte that I myght not susteyne myself. (14)

The guilt of these figures is recognized as deadly sin, but it is not expiated by confession or penitence. Moreover, the Christian context of medieval tragedy would allow for the assurance that all sin had been assumed by God himself in the person of Christ. Yet for the characters of the Morte Darthur there is no relief from sin and the pain it brings. They take on the likeness of wise and chastened sinners, but the proportion and emphasis of the Christian universe is betrayed at every turn.

The third theory of tragedy, that of the "tragic vision", represents at once a modern, post-Christian search for new values and an increasing tendency to internalize action as an exchange of points of view or an analysis of motivation. This conception of tragedy is best expressed in Jean Anouilh's version of Antigone.

> ...on sait qu'on est pris...et qu'on n'a plus qu'à crier... à gueler à pleine voix ce qu'on avait à dire, qu'on n'avait jamais dit et qu'on ne savait peut-être même pas encore...Alors, voilà, cela commence. La petite Antigone est prise. La petite Antigone va pouvoir être elle-même pour la première fois. (15)

Tragedy, according to this theory, is a process of discovery, of self and values, but a process which is essentially defeatist, since it must take place after all hope is gone and after any perception of a new truth can be made effective.

In the Morte Darthur, tragic illumination is remarkable by its absence. There is no new knowledge which issues from the characters' rejection of accepted values and definitions. Of course, "visions" abound, especially in the later tales, but these are sent from an orthodox heaven and are seldom heeded; they are instead indications of divine authority which the central characters manage to ignore until

personal pride and impersonal fortune bring about the catastrophe. The final conflict does not reframe the past in a new and larger perspective; the real causes and issues at stake are no clearer when the book ends than when it began.

It is this thematic ambiguity which ultimately characterizes the Morte Darthur. In the absence of a tragic vision, impossible because the heroes lack real integrity, their tragedy, if it exists at all, is that of fallen man, of exile from a chivalric Eden. In Malory's story, orthodox salvation does not obliterate guilt and pride, nor is there anything clean or final about the outcome in tragic, human terms. There is only confusion, hesitation, and a pathetic sense of loss.[17]

It is evident that the Morte Darthur satisfies only partially each of the classical, medieval and modern theories of tragedy suggested above. It should be equally evident that Malory was writing in a context, literary and philosophical, in which the romance rather than tragedy was the dominant genre. Given the perspective of Christian belief, medieval literature emphasized the "rising, cosmic action of resurrection and reunion" which was best expressed by the romantic motifs of quest and wish fulfilment. One of the characters in Chrétien's twelfth-century romance Yvain describes himself and at the same time defines the spirit of early romance thus:

> je sui, fet il, uns chevaliers
> qui quier ce que trover ne puis...
> Avanture, por esprover
> ma proesce et mon hardement. (18)

In spite of negative forces at times barely held under control ("ce que trover ne puis"), Chrétien's romances are fundamentally optimistic.

The cyclical romances which were derived from Chrétien's unfinished Lancelot and Perceval attempted to continue the impulse and movement of the original poems; the thirteenth-century Queste del Saint Graal (which Malory used as the source of his "Tale of the Sankgreall") represents perhaps the most refined stage of this evolution. In the Queste's symmetrical interlace pattern is reflected an equally symmetical thematic balance between earthly and celestial chivalry, and the clear Christian message that the world must be forsaken if eternity is to be perceived and gained.[19]

But the Mort Artu, which completes the thirteenth-century Vulgate romances and which Malory used as a source in his last tales, forces the negative aspect of romance into the open. The Mort Artu explores the failure of the quest motif and of the ideal of earthly chivalry, themes which reinforce negatively the message of the preceding Queste.[20]

Malory's use of the Vulgate cycle as source material places him in direct succession to the French romance tradition. But Malory accentuates the catastrophe of the Mort Artu by excluding the Queste's orthodox vision as a thematic alternative. As it appears in the Morte, the Grail sequence is itself thematically ambiguous, and stands in obscure relation to the rest of the tales.[21] Without the French Queste's clear moral perspective, the destruction of the Arthurian world and the earthly chivalry assumes a proportionately greater importance: the early optimism and order of Chrétien's romances collapse in the face of individual and social failure to live up to the chivalric ideal.

In addition, Malory drew on English romance, and its separate tradition of epic heroism and of sharpened awareness of the tragic and ironic possibilities implicit in the genre. With his inheritance of

both romance traditions, Malory applied the emphasis of the English romances to the form and text of the French Vulgate "branches", to take the genre full circle from optimism and wish fulfilment to pessimism and irony. He left, however, the smallest crack possible in this wall of defeat, a faint hope which reveals the participation of the Morte Darthur in the fundamental movement of romance, as a genre.

The book does not end with the last battle and the death of Arthur. These are, admittedly, tragic in themselves, and form a logical conclusion to a tragic situation. But we are not left with Bedivere on the bank as Arthur sails off to Avalon, saying, "Comforte thyselff... for in me ys no truste to trust in." Instead, an entire episode follows covering a chronological period of seven years, in which we see how those who are left after the battle in fact manage to survive. Their suffering, while it never entirely disappears, lessens in intensity during this time, to the point that, when Launcelot hears of the queen's death, he "wepte not gretely, but syghed". And just as Arthur's Round Table continues its fellowship in the little brotherhood of hermits, fading by degrees as the old knights die one by one, so Launcelot dies slowly, unheroically, overwhelmed by grief and regret, but (unlike a figure of tragedy) past feeling them keenly. "He seekened more and more and dryed and dwyned awaye." At first intolerable, suffering eats away until the soul can bear it. We are left not with tragedy, but with a curious complex of pathos, fatality and Christian orthodoxy--and a tacit refusal to resolve these elements into a coherent, to say nothing of a tragic, vision.[22]

Thematically, the last episode of the Morte implies a faint and ironic echo of the optimism characteristic of earlier romance and par-

ticularly of the French corpus. It represents survival in a minor key, for although the circle of man's knowledge and power widened as the Arthurian story progressed, man himself was still drawn very small within it. Because of the medieval distrust of existential knowledge as sinful pride, Malory could not have accepted the positive aspect of "hubris" as that of drawing man larger within the circle of his fate.[23] Nor could he accept his contemporary vision of Christian orthodoxy, that of forsaking the world and its temporal ideals for an eternally ideal order. The final scenes of the Morte Darthur continue to portray, not tragic illumination, but the original romantic illusion as expressed by Chrétien in Yvain, quoted above.

Although the tragic elements present in the Morte Darthur are genuine and impressive, the general, formal direction of the work is purely romantic. It is retrospective, suffused, like the individual characters, with nostalgia, and built around earlier, outworn romance themes and motifs.[24] Chaucer and Cervantes deflected romance into comedy, while Spenser allegorized romance in the guise of epic and Marlow re-established "hubris" as an important element of tragedy. But Malory maintained the essential balance of romance elements even while emphasizing the genre's negative aspects. The literary effectiveness should therefore not be mistaken for that of tragedy, and thus divorced from the long tradition of medieval romance, of which it is one of the last significant examples.

NOTES

1. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 120,1229,1259. See Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, passim; Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte" in Essays on Malory, ed. Bennett, pp. 64-103; S. J. Miko, "Malory and the Chivalric Order", Medium AEvum XXXV (1966), 211-230.

2. For Malory's localization of his story in his contemporary England, see G. R. Stewart, "English Geography in Malory's Morte Darthur", Modern Language Review XXX (1935), 204-209; E. D. Kennedy, "Malory's Use of Hardyng's Chronicle", Notes and Queries CCXIV (1969), 167-170; and R. H. Wilson, "More Borrowings by Malory from Hardyng's Chronicle", Notes and Queries CCXV (1970), 208-210.

3. Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, pp. 64,183,233; E. K. Chambers, Sir Thomas Malory (London: English Association, 1971), p. 14; Lewis, "The English Prose Morte" and Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte", in Essays on Malory, ed. Bennett, pp. 7, 101; Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, p. 1621; Charles Moorman, A Knyght There Was: the evolution of the knight in literature (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967), p. 104.

4. Aristotle, Poetics, ed. Francis Fergusson, tr. S. H. Butler (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961), pp. 45-118. See also M. T. Herrick, The Poetics of Aristotle in England (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), pp. 2-13.

5. The classical view of tragedy as applied to the Morte Darthur is recently upheld by the authors of Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky.

6. The authors of Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, are consistent in that they also perceive an Aristotelian structural unity in the Morte Darthur. See chapter VIII.

7. Boethius, The Consolation of Philosophy, tr. Chaucer, in Complete Works, ed. Robinson, p. 331. Cf. definitions of tragedy formulated by John of Salisbury and Vincent of Beauvais, in Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic to 1400, pp. 175-176; and Atkins, English Literary Criticism: the medieval phase, p. 87.

8. Chaucer, "The Monk's Tale", in Complete Works, ed. Robinson, p. 189.

9. C. S. Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century excluding Drama (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), pp. 2-5; Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being (1936: New York: Harper and Row reprint, 1960), pp. 85-86; and Georges Poulet, Les Métamorphoses du cercle (Paris: Plon, 1961), introduction.

10. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 1233,1240,1253,1254.

11. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, p. 1253. A critical commentary on this episode is given by Jean Frappier, "Sur un remaniement de la Mort Artu dans un manuscrit du XIVe siècle: le Palatinus latinus 1967", Romania LVII (1931), 214-222. The interpolation is quoted on pp. 215-216 of this article, and also in Frappier's edition of the Mort Artu, in the appendix.

12. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 1254-1255,1258-1259.

13. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 1230, 1252, 1256.

14. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, p. 1256.

15. Jean Anouilh, Antigone (Paris: Table Ronde, 1946), pp. 55-56. Cf. Richard B. Sewall, The Tragic Vision (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), pp. 5,7: "...artists confront the existential question...'How to be?'...Whatever he finds men capable of in action and under extremest pressure is to him the truth..."

16. Cf. Moorman, A Knyght There Was, pp. 105,107, who rejects an interpretation of the last books of the Morte Darthur as either Aristotelian or Christian tragedy, but who insists nevertheless that they form some sort of tragedy "deeper than that of Aristotle... I realize I have emerged with an existential Malory, and it might be argued [--indeed it can--] that I am reading a dreat deal into Malory..."

17. Cf. Scholes and Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative, pp. 126-127: "The alternative to this rising, cosmic action of resurrection and reunion is not tragedy, but irony....A tragic 'fall' from high to low felicity in the city of man was for the medieval Christian but an ironic reversal of one's potential for spiritual elevation to the City of God."

18. Chrétien de Troyes, Yvain: le chevalier au lion, ed. Mario Roques (Paris: Champion, 1970), ll. 354-366.

19. Jean Frappier, "The Vulgate Cycle", in Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages, ed. Loomis, pp. 295-318; Eugène Vinaver, A la recherche d'une poétique médiévale (Paris: Nizet, 1970), pp. 105-128.

20. Mort Artu, ed. Frappier, passim; Frappier, Etude sur la Mort le roi Artu, second ed. (Geneva: Droz/Paris: Minard, 1961), pp. 219-343,402-405.

21. Cf. Moorman, "The Tale of the Sankgreall: human frailty", in Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, pp. 184-204; and P. E. Tucker, " The Place of the Quest of the Holy Grail in the Morte Darthur", Modern Language Review XLVIII (1953), 391-397.

22. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 1254-1258.

23. Poulet, Les Métamorphoses du cercle, pp. iii-xxxi.

24. Cf. Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 26-37: "...the elegaic is often accompanied by a diffused, melancholy sense of the passing of time, of the old order changing and yielding to a new one."

CHAPTER VIII: COMPILATION AND THE QUESTION OF UNITY

Caxton's published version of Malory's Arthuriad differs greatly in formal organization from the text of the Winchester manuscript. Although presumably Caxton's copy was much like the Winchester version, the Morte Darthur was printed as a unified, continuous narrative consisting of five hundred and seven short chapters assembled into twenty-one books, and Malory's manuscript "explicits" were omitted.[1] The printing press dictated these changes in large measure, although book divisions, chapter headings, and even tables of contents appear in late medieval manuscripts. Such a transformation also corresponded to the structural evolution of romance from an open, cyclical organization to a unified series of narrative actions.

In spite of such bibliographical reorganization, however, late medieval literature still cannot be read according to the literary assumptions of the post-medieval period, which take as axiomatic not only the concepts of "text" and "edition" derived from printing practice, but also the theories of literary composition developed from the revival of Aristotle's Poetics.[2] Moreover, even if post-medieval literary conceptions are recognized as anachronistic in the case of medieval writing, there remains the problem of discovering the actual aesthetics which the medieval writer did observe. The poetics of Geoffrey of Vinsauf, Matthew of Vendôme, John Garlande and others deal with rhetorical rather than specifically compositional problems, and they emphasize the orna-

ment of individual sentences rather than the form of the work as a whole.[3] The medieval conception of literature, like the medieval idea of translation, seldom considered a unit larger than the phrase or sentence.

Nevertheless, in some vernacular genres such as the "exemplum" sermon, the "fabliau" and the saint's tale, all of which are characterized by simplicity of design and purpose, formal conventions developed.[4] They influenced the form of romance, but as a genre, romance, like the modern novel, never crystallized into a conventional pattern. Instead, the genre evolved continuously from the twelfth to the fifteenth century. We are faced today, when we read medieval romance, not with a single conventional form which differs from our modern expectations of prose narrative, but with the even more difficult problem of an evolution of forms which are equally "formless" and incomprehensible by modern standards.

The first manifestation of this unpredictable development may be seen in Chrétien's romances, written during the second half of the twelfth century. These were based on Celtic motifs that had earlier taken the form of short "lais". Chrétien's art was to expand these stories and make them expressive of the thematic preoccupations of his own culture.[5] His romances reveal a more or less characteristic form: after an early but temporary success, the heroes of these poems are led to perform a graded series of tests which result in a new victory, more spiritually profound than the first. It can be assumed that this basic pattern, present in Erec and Yvain, would have applied also to the unfinished Perceval. The Lancelot, also unfinished, nevertheless follows the pattern of first success with a subsequent series of proving tests.[6]

What is more important for the development of romance than this internal pattern is the emergence already within Chrétien's work of a formal tendency beyond the narrative design of the individual romances. The details of his stories--the characters and the events in which they take part--are separable from the individual romances and are capable of being recombined in other romances. Each romance is thus self-contained in its own narrative pattern and thematic emphasis. But at the same time, all of these romances are set in the same Arthurian landscape, which permits the characters of one romance to be related to those in the others. In the three later works, Yvain, Lancelot, and Perceval, the rather mysterious figure of Gauvain penetrates each romance as a counterfoil to the hero. The closely interdependent nature of these romances becomes apparent in the comparison of their time-schemes: Chrétien transfers Gauvain from one romance to the other according to a chronology that applies to all of the works, as if they formed, simultaneously, separate romances and a single story.[7] Here is the first sign of the interlace technique that was to become a narrative principle in later redactions of Chrétien's Arthurian material.

The Perceval continuations, Robert de Boron's early history of the Grail, and the Vulgate and post-Vulgate cycles all derived from Chrétien's preoccupation with the chivalric ideal and from his innovative techniques of narration. By a combination of "amplificatio" and "abbreviatio", the twelfth-century romances were extended and transformed.

"Amplificatio" added more details in an attempt to account for mysterious or contradictory elements in Chrétien's unfinished romances. Thus the heroes developed dynasties; their progress from the beginning to the achievement of their quests was slowed and interrupted by the ad-

dition of explanatory episodes; and sequences were interrelated within larger time-schemes. A detail could spawn an entire episode; this episode, in turn, was inserted into the whole as a new thread of the interlace pattern. In this way, Robert de Boron provided an early history of the Grail as a preface to the Perceval, which, because it was left unfinished at Chrétien's death, prompted four continuations, all amplified from the themes and situation of the Conte du Graal. The Lancelot grew into the voluminous prose Lancelot del Lac, and in due course the amplified Perceval and Lancelot were combined. Eventually a prose Tristan was incorporated into later versions of this Vulgate cycle.[8]

"Amplificatio" alone did not shape and interrelate these thirteenth-century cycles; they were equally indebted for their development on the complementary technique of "abbreviatio" to summarize, co-ordinate, and combine old and new subject matter so that a new perspective and thematic emphasis could be expressed.[9] "Abbreviatio", as a principle of selection, was necessary to reshape the narrative material in, for example, the Perceval romances, so that the internal symmetry of the Queste del Saint Graal and the general proportions of the Vulgate cycle could be established. By means of "abbreviatio", the prophecies and foreshadowing of earlier romances were collected and concentrated in the Mort Artu according to a particular view of the Arthurian chivalric ideal. Thus "abbreviatio" made possible a logical and coherent extension of the mass of matter created by the technique of "amplificatio".

Use of these two methods resulted in the evolution of Arthurian romance as a cyclic design of interrelated episodes and romances. The

interrelated romances came to be known as "branches", of which there were five in the Vulgate cycle. Cyclic form was a general literary phenomenon of the period from the twelfth to the fifteenth century; as well as romance cycles, there were related epic "gestes", the dramatic mystery cycles, the "fabliau" cycle of Renart, the biographical "razos" of the troubadours, and the hagiographical cycle of the Legenda aurea.[10]

Frame-stories such as the Decameron and the Canterbury Tales, on the other hand, are late variants of this cyclic tendency: they represent collections of stories rather than cycles of episodes and "branches". Similar in form are the Cent nouvelles nouvelles, the Quinze joies de mariage, and the Heptaméron (all contemporary with Caxton and the Morte Darthur). These works exhibit a later medieval tendency to simplify narrative into small units like the "fabliaux", so that the stories within the frame may be related thematically but remain structurally independent of each other.[11] Within the Arthurian corpus, this new narrative impulse is reflected in a shift in balance from an increasingly complex interlace design to shorter and more continuous narrative units. "Abbreviatio" summarized and reduced the elaborate and interwoven cyclic narrative, which occupied thousands of manuscript pages in the thirteenth-century versions, to a shorter and somewhat simplified account of Arthur's life, occupying merely hundreds of pages.

The dominance of "abbreviatio" at this time provided a chance to create a new thematic overview by determining the pattern of events within a preconceived and unified thematic perspective. A writer such as Malory could profit from this opportunity; other redactors were less

aware of the creative possibiilities offered by the shift in narrative fashion. Even so, whatever their level of artistic competence, the late redactors of Arthurian material were the first to experiment with the principle of literary composition that we call structural unity. Because their inherited subject matter was so strongly marked with the earlier conception of multiplicity and expansion, their redactions can hardly be said to be "unified" in the modern critical sense. But the evolution of this idea may be traced in romances from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, by examining the various meanings of the term "book" that occur in them.

The word "book" ("livre") appeared in the "incipit" and "explicit" rubrics of cyclic manuscripts to indicate three distinct functions. The first designated the volume in which the romance or romances were written. For example, in the Estoire del Saint Graal, the first "branche" of the Vulgate cycle, the author tells how

> ...apres cel mot [il] me prinst par la main et me bailla un livre qui n'estoit pas plus grans en tous endrois que la palme d'un home... (12)

Thus Philippe of Flanders gave the story of Perceval to Chrétien, and thus, three hundred years later, Malory could shift from book to book within a single sequence of dialogue.

> "Sir," he seyde, "I had [that shylde] of quene Morgan le Fay, suster to kynge Arthure.
> SO HERE LEVITH OF THIS BOOKE, FOR HIT YS THE FIRSTE BOOK OF SIR TRYSTRAM DE LYONES. AND THE SECUNDE BOKE BEGYNNYTH WHERE SIR TRYSTRAM SMOTE DOWNE KYNGE ARTHURE AND SIR UWAYNE...
> "And yf hit be so ye can dyscryve what ye beare, ye ar worthy to beare armys."
> "As for that," seyde sir Trystram, "I woll answere you..." (13)

Used in this first sense, "livre" or "book" indicated, not a narrative

structure, but the physical volume in which one or more narratives were written down.

The second meaning of "book" was synonymous with "compte" or "estoire"; in this instance, the word applied to particular narrative structures, self-contained plot sequences that might or might not be included in one volume. For example, in later redactions of the Arthurian cycle, the Suite du Merlin, a continuation of the story of Merlin in the Estoire del Saint Graal, was distinguished from other "books" which treated of related subject matter:

> ...mes de cestes aventure, comment il advint, ne parole mie cest livre, car messire Helyes le devise appertement ou Compte du Brait, pour ce que elle appartient a la vie Baudemagu...car [l'auteur de ce livre-ci] ne veult mie compter chose qui en autres comptes soit appartement devisée... (14)

Here the Merlin author indicated that one book was distinct from another by its authorship and by the logical arrangement of subject matter around a main subject.

The third meaning of the term "book" was to become familiar to Renaissance writers who were intent on imitation of classical epic structure--that of equal internal divisions which formally indicated the symmetry and coherence of the work as a whole. This meaning was less widespread and certainly practiced with less skill during the period of cyclic formation, but it existed none the less and was recorded by the author of the Suite du Merlin as early as 1240.

> Et sacent que toit cil qui l'estoire mon signeur de Borron vaurront oïr comme il devise son livre en trois parties, l'une partie aussi grant comme l'autre, la premiere aussi grande que la seconde et la seconde aussi grande que la tierche. (15)

It is evident by this prologue that the modern concept of a symmetri-

cally constructed, self-contained narrative was not entirely foreign to vernacular writers even during the period of intense cyclic formation. But although the idea of a unified narrative structure was understood, it continued to be subordinated to the aesthetic preference of the high Middle Ages for multiplicity, complexity and inclusiveness.[16] The concurrent use of these three meanings of "book", as well as the overwhelming tendency of thirteenth-century romancers to expand their material gave both a vague conception of literary composition and a cyclical pattern of structure as an example to later writers handling romances. These redactors were sometimes confused by a pattern which they could no longer create, yet with which they had to work. The interlace structure of the prose Lancelot, for instance, was treated as a series of disjointed episodes by the later author of the prose Tristan, while late versions of the Lancelot-Graal sequence took the form of now three books, now four, and occasionally of a single undivided narrative.[17]

Although claims to symmetry (the use of the term "book" in the third sense given above) are indeed voiced, the looser concept of the "branche" continued more pervasive and influential in vernacular writing until the sixteenth century. The author of the Suite used the term in the following passage, one in which he is still concerned with the overall size and proportion of his work.

> ...une petite branke qui appartient a mon livre....Ne je l'en sevraisse ja se je ne doutaisse que ci livres fust trop grans, mais pour chou l'en departirai jou, et li envoierai. (18)

He obviously felt that the "petite branke" was separable from his main matter; even so, he was anxious to defend the separation against those

who would claim that it was an integral part of the longer story. In any case, the awareness of structural integrity revealed by this writer was awareness only in an abstract and untried sense. The cyclical pattern already imprinted on the subject matter was too strong for these writers to efface or even to control effectively.

The tendency to separate and break down the earlier inclusive pattern slowly gained ground during the later medieval period. Many reasons could be given for this shift in literary taste, the most plausible being related to the defeat of the Scholastic philosophical synthesis, and to the emergence of separate European states from the at least theoretical unity of Christendom. While still avoiding the fallacy of imagining the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as an age of decline and decay, we may take into account contemporary pessimism and nostalgia, which contrasted with the impressive serenity and creativity of the thirteenth century. The later medieval period was a time of transition to new conditions and values at variance with the traditional philosophical and feudal orders from which the impulse for inclusiveness and structural complexity in literature had been derived.[19]

Thus division and fragmentation won over the cumulative tendency of cyclical writing. The romance cycles were condensed, reorganized and even split up according to an increasingly strong sense of structural unity and of the work as a whole. But medieval writers dealing with Arthurian material, like their Renaissance successors, were faced with the necessity to transform an already structured tradition; the pattern of complexity, represented by innumerable prologues, sequels,

transitions and interpolated passages remained stronger than the later writers' efforts to simplify and unify it.

Three examples of late medieval treatment of cyclical material may serve to illustrate this disparity between the established pattern and the subsequent tendency to reduction, division and simplification. All date from the latter half of the fifteenth century.

The first printed edition of the prose Lancelot del Lac was published in Paris in 1488; the edition consisted of two volumes, each of which was divided into sections and subdivided into chapters, although neither the parts nor the chapters necessarily represented logical breaks in the narrative structure. Instead, it appears that the symmetry of length, more arbitrary than logical, was the deciding factor. The editors did not therefore transform their text into a new narrative pattern, but were content to impose formal divisions in a merely superficial way on a work that remained essentially unchanged.[20]

Like the first edition of Lancelot, the manuscript B. N. fr. 116 treated the Lancelot-Graal (the prose Lancelot and the last "branches" of the Vulgate cycle) as a single major narrative. The text of the 116, again like the printed edition, is a relatively unchanged copy of the earlier Vulgate manuscripts. It ends with the following rubric:

> En ce livre a vijcxxxv feuilletz et histoires ijcij. Cy fine le livre de messire Lancelot du Lac....Et a este divisé le livre en trois parties....Et est devisé chascun des trois livres de Lancelot en deux branches.
> La premiere branche du premier livre finit comment le Duc de Bellegarde coppa la teste au roy Lancelot...ayeul de messire Lancelot du Lac...La seconde branche du premier livre commence a la nativité de Merlin...
> La premiere branche du second livre commence...a la naissance de Lancelot....La seconde branche du second livre commence quant Vivienne, Dame du Lac, trouva Lancelot fol...

> La premiere branche du tiers et derrenier livre commence a la Queste du Saint Graal....La seconde et derreniere branche du tiers et derrenier livre commence aux Mors Artus, et finist a la mort de Lancelot, et ainsi fine ce present livre. Amen. (21)

Again, the formal organization aims at symmetry--three books, each divided into two "branches"--but only the sub-sections of the "tiers et derrenier livre" are "branches" in the older cyclical sense. Those of the first and second books have been imposed by the fifteenth-century redactor in response to the increasingly prevalent tendency to impose form on earlier, "formless" cyclical narrative.

A third example of late medieval romance redaction is found in the manuscript B. N. fr. 112, a version of the complete Arthurian cycle copied in 1470 by Micheau Gonnot, a clerk in the service of the Duc de Nemours.[22] Gonnot's name is also listed as the copier of MS B. N. fr. 116, but in the case of the 112, it has been estimated that Gonnot was not only scribe but compiler as well and thus deserves mention as a contributor to the evolution of the romance cycles of this period in much the same sense as Malory is. The 112 compilation, which draws on all of the major Arthurian prose romances, reveals that Gonnot and Malory had several techniques in common, by which they reduced and assembled their sources. Gonnot's redaction shows a concerted attempt to condense and simplify earlier cyclical material; like Malory, however, Gonnot did not abridge uniformly, but instead selected passages that he would leave intact, those he would paraphrase to a greater or lesser degree, and those he would omit entirely. Gonnot thus emphasized the principal adventures of his two heroes, Lancelot and Tristan, although (like Malory again) he preserved all of the significant detail of the Queste and the Mort Artu. More than once, Gonnot shaped

his various sources into a coherent narrative by unwinding the interrupted episodes of the interlaced Vulgate version and telling them as continuous sequences, but as a general rule, he continued to integrate the prose Lancelot, the prose Tristan, the Suite du Merlin and the Palamede by means of the traditional combination of "amplificatio" and "abbreviatio", thus forming a new, condensed, but still interlaced narrative. In such a practice, Gonnot's redaction contrasts with Malory's, since the author of the Morte Darthur went farther than any other compiler of Arthurian material to isolate narrative sequences and relate various sources within a single account.[23]

The formal organization illustrated by these three examples is their division into "livres", "branches", "parties", chapters and paragraphs, the first three generally accompanied by painted miniatures and the last two by two- or three-line initials. As well, there were rubrics (in red ink) heading or concluding sections with descriptions of their subject matter. These formal divisions were adopted by the early printers, together with the occasional manuscript practice of furnishing a table of contents to the entire work. But in terms of actual reorganization and restructuring of the Arthurian cycle, French redactions dating from the end of the medieval period show no radical innovation.

Malory's version of the same material shows, by contrast, a greater adaptation in the direction of simplification and organization in narrative series. But it must be stressed that Malory appears more "modern" only by contrast with writers of the period and the traditional structure of the sources. Even in Caxton's edition, the Morte Darthur

cannot be judged or understood other than by keeping in mind the relative, transitional nature of literary conceptions during the late medieval period.

Malory's method of compilation followed much the same development as his method of translation: the two techniques are intimately related and may in fact be considered as two phases of the same process--that of Malory's adaptation of his French sources.

In the first tales, despite drastic abridgement of certain passages, Malory interpolated new episodes and details into the source narrative, following the traditional interlace technique. From the start, however, he took pains to underline the prophetic aspect of the early events. For example, he rewrote the Balin episode to emphasize its relation to the later Grail quest. In addition, he controlled rather than passively followed the story sequence of the alliterative Morte Arthure, source of "The Tale of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius", by altering details and by interrupting it, so that the events of Arthur's reign as told in the Vulgate cycle became a sort of vast interpolation before the death of Arthur was finally recounted, in the last book of Malory's work.

When Malory interrupted the Morte Arthure and turned again to his French sources, he was faced with such a mass of material in the prose Tristan that he felt compelled to select only a few episodes from it, rather than to reproduce it more or less entirely. This he did by unravelling fifteen distinct episodes and narrating them in sequence (as Gonnot also did with one of these, "La Cote Mal Tayle"). In the prose Tristan, the delicate chronology which controlled the interlace of the

Vulgate prose Lancelot had become blurred, although the structure of interlaced episodes remained. By radically redesigning the sequence of events as separate rather than interlaced units, Malory avoided the disintegration of form that marred his source Tristan and that continued to plague his contemporary Micheau Gonnot. The separate episodes formed miniature tales within the "Book of Sir Trystrem", just as "Sir Trystrem" forms a tale within the complete work.[24] The English writer was on his way to creating a simpler, more compact narrative structure from the French cyclical sources, and for this he had the model of the Canterbury Tales, as well as the precedent of detached, separate English translations of the French material.

With the Queste, on the other hand, Malory seems to have realized that he could not improve or condense the interlaced progress of the five pilgrim knights by breaking it down into sequential units. The Queste's form was as obviously symmetrical as the prose Lancelot's was subtle and the prose Tristan's loose and awkward. Malory was content to reproduce the Queste as he found it, by reason of its fine structure, and also perhaps because the theme of this romance rather confused him: like Gawain, he could not understand "heavenly chivalry", and was more relieved than disappointed when his hero Launcelot returned to the secular world. Yet he would feel obliged to include the Grail quest in his version because of its moral earnestness and its important formal place in the Vulgate cycle.[25]

By contrast, Malory's last tale was his most creative compilation. As we have seen in considering his methods of translation, Malory drew on the Vulgate Mort Artu and the English stanzaic Morte Arthur, with the alliterative Morte Arthure no doubt also in the back of his mind.

The result is an expression of the thematic "overview" that had governed Malory's selection and interpolation from the start, but here more finely and clearly defined.[26] This is Malory's originality. It is not originality in the copyright sense we have come to recognize since printing became universal and imbued us with its concepts of text and edition; rather, it is the new disposition of traditional material in the light of contemporary values, both moral and literary.[27]

Malory's great debt to the cyclical sources at once complicates and clarifies the question of "unity" in his work. There has been much futile controversy and taking of sides over this problem for several reasons, none of which should prevent us, however, from arriving at a reasonable understanding of Malory's principle of literary construction.

The first reason for confusion over this question lies in the adapted form of Caxton's 1485 edition, entitled the Morte Darthur after Malory's own comment in the final "explicit":

> Here is the ende of the hoole book of kyng Arthur and of his noble knyghtes of the Rounde Table, that whan they were hole togyders there was ever an hondred and forty. And here is the ende of the Deth of Arthur. (28)

The Winchester MS, considered as representative of Malory's own text and organization, or at least of manuscript rather than published form, contains eight "explicits", but when Caxton printed from his manuscript copy, he is thought to have omitted all but this last one, from which he drew the title. In the printed edition, therefore, the first and second of the old meanings of "book" become synonymous: each volume of the edition contains a single romance, the internal divisions of which (now chapters rather than "branches", "livres" or "parties") refer not

to separable sequences within the volume but to the edited romance as a single whole. In effect, the printer's concept of "book" represents a final imposition of the late medieval tendency towards unity and symmetry on a narrative form which had developed under manuscript conditions and according to very different literary standards.

The second reason for confusion was created by Vinaver's attempt to "correct" Caxton's reorganization and to restore the manuscript form of Malory's work. The 1947 edition of the Winchester MS, entitled The Works of Sir Thomas Malory, was destined only to increase the misunderstanding of the Morte Darthur's literary form. In likening Malory's eight tales to the separate publications of a modern novelist, Vinaver was simply perpetuating an imposition of printing concepts on what was still, essentially, a manuscript tradition.[29]

A third reason for recent critical confusion is that the critics who have protested Vinaver's editorial decision have merely fallen back on literary values which were just emerging at the time of Caxton's edition and which have since obliterated the medieval assumptions by which the work was created. These critics are generally ignorant or careless of Malory's debt to French romance (which Vinaver most certainly is not) and consider that Vinaver's edition undermines the schematic and structural "unity" of the Morte Darthur, hence its artistic value.[30] Malory's consistency of theme is evident in either the Winchester MS form or in Caxton's edition, for his thematic preoccupations were simple and few. But the "unity" of organization in either form is not so easy to defend. To judge Malory according to post-medieval standards of literary unity and integrity is to distort an actual literary form in order to make it fit to a series of assumptions of which he was not aware and which actu-

ally run counter to most of those he did follow.

The confusion may be dispelled, I think, not by repeated arguments defending either Vinaver or the "hoole book" theory, but rather by recourse to the various medieval conceptions of "book" which have been explained above. In his last "explicit", Malory says that he has come to the end of two books--the "Deth of Arthur", and the "hoole book". It is evident that here we have the second and third of the medieval meanings of "book", given together. "The Deth of Arthur" is an internal division of the whole book which covers the complete Arthurian cycle, in the same sense as there are regular epic divisions in the AEneid or in the Faerie Queene, but related more directly to the divisions of "livre" and "partie" which appear in the late redactions of cyclical romance.

Thus the structural coherence of the Morte Darthur must be regarded as a transitional phenomenon, reflecting both its manuscript and printed forms and reflecting also its double inheritance of the French and English literary traditions.

NOTES

1. See chapter IX.

2. Eugène Vinaver, "Critical Approaches to Medieval Romance", in Literary History and Literary Criticism, ed. Leon Edel (New York: International Federation of Languages and Literatures, 1964), pp. 16-27. On the medieval and Renaissance awareness and understanding of Aristotle's Poetics, see Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, pp. 153,221,241,147-251; and Gilbert Highet, The Classical Tradition: Greek and Roman influences on western literature (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 123; also William Ryding, The Structure of Medieval Narrative (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), pp. 9-19.

3. Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic to 1400, pp. 187-193,267-269. Cf. Geoffrey of Vinsauf, Documentum de modo et arte dictandi et versificandi, ed. and tr. Parr, pp. 35-39. See also chapter V.

4. Zumthor, Essai de poétique médiévale, pp. 394-401; P. Nykrog, Les Fabliaux: étude d'histoire littéraire et de stylistique médiévale (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1957); and G. R. Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933), pp. 471-547.

5. Chrétien de Troyes, Erec et Enide, ed. Mario Roques (Paris: Champion, 1952), l. 14; and Lancelot: le chevalier de la charrette, ed. Mario Roques (Paris: Champion, 1958), ll. 24-29. Cf. Zumthor, Essai de poétique médiévale, p. 362: "Par matière, Chrétien entend l'argument de la narration...le sen en constitue l'interpretation proposée ou possible....Conjointure designe l'ajustement de l'un à l'autre, l'équilibre réalisé par l'art de l'auteur, l'unité interne..."

6. Chrétien, Erec, ed. Roques; Lancelot, ed. Roques; Yvain, ed. Roques; Perceval, ou le Conte du Graal, ed. William Roach (Geneva: Droz/ Paris: Minard, 1959). Cf. Auerbach, Mimesis, pp. 107-114; and R. R. Bezzola, Le Sens de l'aventure et de l'amour: Chrétien de Troyes (Paris: La Jeune Parque, 1947).

7. Chrétien, Yvain, ed. Roques, ll. 3700-3709,3912-3933; and Lancelot, ed. Roques, ll. 4915-5172. Cf. Bogdanow, The Romance of the Grail pp. 1-2; and Jean Frappier, Etude sur Yvain (Paris: Edition d'enseignement surpérieur, 1969), pp. 62-65.

8. A. W. Thompson, "The Additions to Chrétien's Perceval", Pierre Le-Gentil, "Robert de Boron and the Didot Perceval", and Jean Frappier, "The Vulgate Cycle", in Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages, ed. Loomis, pp. 206-217,251-262,295-318. Zumthor, Essai de poétique médiévale, pp. 346-370, stresses the important shift from verse to prose form in the early thirteenth-century romances; cf. Vinaver, A la recherche d'une poétique médiévale, pp. 129-149;

and The Rise of Romance, pp. 68-98; also Jean Frappier, "Unité et diversité du Lancelot en prose", in Etude sur la Mort le roi Artu, pp. 27-146,183-187. See also Bogdanow, The Romance of the Grail, pp. 1-22 and passim; and Pierre LeGentil, "Réflexions sur la création littéraire au moyen âge", Cultura neolatina XX (1960), 129-140.

9. Ryding, The Structure of Medieval Narrative, pp. 66 ff.,139 ff.; Baltzell, "Rhetorical Amplification and Abbreviation and the Structure of Medieval Narrative", Pacific Coast Philology II (1967), 32-39; William A. Nitze, "Perlesvaus" and C. E. Pickford, "Miscellaneous French Prose Romances", in Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages, ed. Loomis, pp. 263-273,348-357; Le Haut livre du Graal (Perlesvaus), ed. William A. Nitze and T. A. Jenkins (New York: Phaeton Press, 1972); Vinaver, A la recherche d'une poétique médiévale, pp. 163-177.

10. Ryding, The Structure of Medieval Narrative, pp. 54-61. See also Lucien Foulet, Le Roman de Renart (Paris: Champion, 1914); Stanislaw Stronski, Le Roman amoureuse de Bertrand de Born (Paris: Champion, 1914), and Le Roman du Chastelain de Couci, ed. J. E. Matzke and M. Delbouille (Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1936).

11. Boccaccio, Decameron, tr. John Payne (Philadelphia: J. P. Horn, 1928); Chaucer, Complete Works, ed. Robinson; Marguerite de Navarre, Heptaméron, ed. M. François (Paris: Garnier, 1967); Les .XV. Joies de mariage, ed. Jean Rychner (Geneva: Droz/Paris: Minard, 1967); Les Cent nouvelles nouvelles, ed. F. P. Sweetser (Geneva: Droz, 1966). See also Ryding, The Structure of Medieval Narrative, pp. 43-52.

12. Estoire del Saint Graal, in The Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances, ed. Sommer, I, 5.

13. Chrétien, Perceval, ed. Roach, ll. 66-67; Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, p. 559. Cf. MS B. N. fr. 334, folio 290a (Vinaver has described this MS as closely resembling Malory's lost source for this passage). See C. E. Pickford, L'Evolution du roman arthurien en prose (Paris: Nizet, 1959), pp. 68-72,129-153.

14. Merlin, ed. Paris and Ulrich, II, 198. Cf. MS B. N. fr. 112, II, 49r. "Messire Helyes" is the apocryphal Elie de Boron.

15. Merlin, ed. Paris and Ulrich, I, 280.

16. Ryding, The Structure of Medieval Narrative, pp. 115-161.

17. Pickford, L'Evolution du roman arthurien en prose, pp. 112,138,147, 170-171; and Ryding, The Structure of Medieval Narrative, pp. 60-61,146-147,152-154.

18. Merlin, ed. Paris and Ulrich, II, 58.

19. See chapters III, IV and VII. Cf. Johan Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages (1924: New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1954), passim; and Duby and Mandrou, Histoire de la civilisation française, I, 188: "Faut-il, comme Huizinga, et après lui tant d'historiens, parler à propos des XIVe et XVe siècles de crépuscule, de décadence?...Il y a dans cette vue pessimiste un reste de romantisme." If so, the contemporary chroniclers and Malory were also romantic. See also Erwin Panofsky, Meaning in the Visual Arts (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1955), pp. 108-145,169-177; and David Knowles, The Evolution of Medieval Thought (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1962), pp. 291-340.

20. Lancelot del Lac, ed. Jehan and Gaillard LeBougeois and Jehan duPré (1488), facsimile ed. C. E. Pickford (Menston: Scolar Press reprint, 1973).

21. MS B. N. fr. 116. I have chosen this example of late medieval French prose romance because it conforms closely with the printed Lancelot and the MS B. N. fr. 112 in terms of subject matter and composition. It goes without saying, however, that this is a single example of the enormous number of similar manuscripts in the Bibliothèque nationale and Arsenal (Paris), the British Museum (London), and the Bibliothèque royale (Brussels), as well as other important libraries in Europe and the United States.

22. For a detailed description, analysis and summary of the contents of MS B. N. fr. 112, see Pickford, L'Evolution du roman arthurien en prose. Parts of this MS have been edited: Erec: roman arthurien en prose...d'après le MS fr. 112 de la Bibliothèque nationale, ed. C. E. Pickford (Geneva: Droz/Paris: Minard, 1959), and the Folie Lancelot: a hitherto unidentified portion of the Suite du Merlin contained in MSS B. N. fr. 112 and 12599 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1965). Bogdanow promises more in the near future; for the moment, however, no impression of the form of the 112 is possible from these printed exerpts. (The manuscript remains unique, in the B. N. collection, since its bulky binding makes it impossible to microfilm.)

23. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. li-cxxvi,1267-1282, 1363-1371; Thomas Wright, "The Tale of King Arthur: beginnings and foreshadowings", and Mary Dichmann, "The Tale of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius:the rise of Lancelot", in Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, pp. 9-66,67-98. See chapter VI.

24. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 1443-1454; Thomas C. Rumble, "The Tale of Sir Tristrem: development by analogy", in Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, pp. 118-183; Pickford, L'Evolution du roman arthurien en prose, pp. 176-201. Cf. Bogdanow, The Romance of the Grail, p. 196 note 4.

25. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 1534-1542; Charles Moorman, "The Tale of the Sankgreall: human frailty", in Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, pp. 184-204; Lewis, "The English Prose Morte", in Essays on Malory, ed. Bennett, pp. 14-20.

26. See chapters VI and VII.

27. Cf. E. P. Goldschmidt, Medieval Texts and their First Appearance in Print (London: Bibliographical Society, 1943), pp. 86-121. Goldschmidt argues that the scarcity of manuscript books resulted in medieval respect for virtually any book in existence, and at the same time a disregard for individual authorship. To cite and imitate existing authorities was to perpetuate their memory. With the advent of print came also a greater discrimination between good and mediocre texts, and a jealous preservation of the author's text as he had written it.

28. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, p. 1260. Caxton's colophon is reprinted on the same page. Cf. Sally Shaw, "Caxton and Malory", in Essays on Malory, ed. Bennett, pp. 114-143; William Matthews, "Caxton and Malory: a defense", in Medieval Literature and Folklore Studies in honour of Francis Lee Utley, ed. Jerome Mandel (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 19), pp. 85-95. The "hoole book" controversy is summarized by D. S. Brewer, "The Present Study of Malory", in Arthurian Romance, ed. Owen, pp. 77-95, and is resolved by the same author in "The hoole book", in Middle English Survey: critical essays, ed. Edward Vasta (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1965), pp. 233-258.

29. See chapters I and IX.

30. Cf. Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, and Vinaver, The Rise of Romance, and A la recherche d'une poétique médiévale.

CHAPTER IX: EDITIONS OF MALORY'S MORTE DARTHUR

Caxton published the Morte Darthur in 1485, the year of Richard III's death and the ascendency of the Tudors under Henry VII. This end to over a century of intermittent war marked the final decline of medieval knighthood, and could not have been more fittingly announced than by Malory's account, nostalgic and finally ironic, of the Arthurian ideal. For the late fifteenth century, Arthur still represented a focus not only of romance but also of history and popular legend. It is thus, as this complex image, that Caxton recommended Malory's work in his prologue.

> Many noble and dyuers gentylmen...instantly requyred me temprynte thystorye of...kyng Arthur/ and of his knyghtes.../ To whome I answerd/ that dyuers men holde oppynyon/ that there was no suche Arthur/ and that alle suche bookes as been maad of hym/ ben but fayned and fables.../ Wher to they answerd...there can no man resonably gaynsaye but there was a kyng of thys lande named Arthur.../ And for to passe the tyme thys book shal be plesaunte to rede in/ but for to gyue fayth and byleue that al is trewe that is conteyned herin/ ye be at your liberte. But al is wryton for our doctryne/ and for to beware that we falle not to vyce ne synne, but texercyse and folowe vertu. (1)

As to the literal truth of the Morte Darthur, Caxton showed himself skeptical, but he maintained a nice balance between "fayth and beleue" in the fact and the "doctryne" of their moral implications.

Caxton's most obvious editorial changes concerned the formal disposition of Malory's compilation. Instead of eight long "tales", such as are found in the Winchester MS, Caxton substituted twenty-one books,

subdivided into chapters, each of which was headed by a rubric. This was a short introduction that explained or summarized the chapter's contents. The following are two examples:

> How syr Trystram de Lyones was borne and how his moder deyed at his byrthe, wherfore she named hym Tristram.
>
> How the Damoysel of the Lake saved kynge Arthur from a mantel which sholde have brente hym. (2)

The twenty-one books were summarized in turn in a table of contents placed at the beginning of the book. This arrangement is also found in the 1488 Paris edition of the prose Lancelot del Lac; both printed books were imitative of the conventions of fifteenth-century manuscript production.[3]

Vinaver has called Caxton's title of Le Morte Darthur "spurious and totally unrepresentative"; in fact this title appears only once, in the epilogue, and Caxton himself qualifies its use for the whole book. "Thus endeth thys noble and Ioyous book entytled le morte Darthur," he comments, adding that the work also tells of Arthur's birth, the Round Table adventures, and the Grail quest as well as of "the dolorous deth & departyng out of thys world of them al".[4] Actually, Vinaver does no more than repeat Caxton's original observation, and both editors have forgotten, as Malory himself had not, that several "branches" of a cycle were often referred to by the title of only one of them, as for example, the last three parts of the Vulgate cycle, known simply as the prose Lancelot.[5]

Caxton edited most radically in his fifth book, in Vinaver's edition "The Tale of the Emperor Lucius". Malory's source had been the alliterative Morte Arthure, which he had followed closely, even to in-

corporating unchanged lines into his prose. By contrast, Caxton then cut the story to a minimum, retaining details that were important for events in later books, and he also normalized the vestiges of early poetic language so that the style of this sequence would conform more closely with that of the rest of the work.[6] In this, he followed Malory's own practice of abbreviation and adaptation of sources, reworking Malory's version as Malory had reworked the earlier, alliterative translation, and as the anonymous author of the Morte Arthure had transcribed the French Vulgate source. Caxton's editing technique thus continued the process of adaptation through translation and compilation that had occupied medieval romance redactors throughout the late medieval period.

By his division of the Morte Darthur into an insignificant and asymmetrical number of books and chapters, and by his abbreviation of the fifth book, we may conclude that Caxton was not concerned with formal symmetry, as were the redactors of the Vulgate cycle, nor with a structured whole, as Spenser was to be in The Faerie Queene, a century later. The rubrics and the table of contents show Caxton to be more concerned to elucidate, by an arrangement of subjects and themes, what he considered was of value in Malory's work--the "doctryne" of virtue and vice.

> For herein may be seen noble chiualrye/ Curtosye/ Humanyte frendlynesse/ hardynesse/ loue/ frendshypp/ Cowardyse/ Murdre/ hate/ vertue/ and synne/ Doo after the good and leue the euyll, and it shal brynge you to good fame and renommee. (7)

The rubrics qualify narrative figures in moral terms: "a noble knyght"; "How Syr Mordred presumed & toke on hym to be kyng"; "pyteous deth".[8]

The rubric of the twenty-first book insists on the victory of good over evil in spite of the final turn of events:"The xxi book treateth of [Arthur's] last departyng, and how syr Launcelot came to revenge his deth." (my emphasis)[9] As we have seen, Launcelot returns to England to find the king dead and the kingdom in ruins; his "revenge" must be seen as a spiritual victory only, but it is doubtful if the last pages of the Morte can convince us of his sainthood. Thus Caxton's simple moral insistence has glossed the irony of Malory's ending, so that critics of the work can still see it as a tragedy rather than, as we have seen, a more historically justified and morally complex form of romance.

Caxton's edition is extant in two copies; one is in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, and the other is in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. A leaf of a third copy was discoved bound into a book printed in 1495.[10] Although the Rylands and Pierpont Morgan copies reveal slight differences, they evidently belong to the same edition, the present scarcity of which may be attributed to hard usage, both from wide reading and from scornful disapproval, during the next three hundred years. An eloquent example of negative criticism of the Morte is found in Roger Ascham's Scholemaster, representative of the humanist and protestant New Learning in England during the sixteenth century.

> In our forefathers tyme, whan Papistrie, as a standyng poole, covered and overflowed all England, fewe bookes were read in our tong, saving certaine bookes of Chevalrie...for example, Morte Arthure: the whole pleasure of which booke standeth in two speciall poyntes, in open mans slaughter and bold bawdry. (11)

Nevertheless, editions of the Morte Darthur continued to appear at intervals throughout this period. Caxton's successor, Wynkyn de Worde, reprinted the book twice, in 1498 and again in 1529. Three more edi-

tions followed, based on Wynkyn de Worde's 1529 text: one in 1557, by William Copland, and two in 1585, by Thomas East.[12]

By the early seventeenth century, protestantism and humanist learning had alienated the educated and ignorant alike from medieval ideas and values. If the Morte Darthur was to appeal to readers of this period, its "popish" element would have to be minimized, and its exotic charm--like that of classical literature, though on a popular and patriotic level--would have to be stressed. It was in these terms that William Stansby introduced his "newly refined" version of 1634.

> Here and there King Arthur or some of his knights were declared in their communication to swear profane, and use superstitious speeches, all (or the most part) of which is either mended or quite left out by the paines and industry of the compositor and corrector of the presse; so that as it is now, it may passe for a famous piece of antiquity, revived almost from oblivion, and rescued for the pleasure and benefit of the present and future times. (13)

Stansby's revival of the Morte Darthur "almost from oblivion" anticipated the work of eighteenth-century antiquarians such as Percy, Ritson and Sir Walter Scott. With varying degrees of editorial accuracy, these three men and others turned critical attention once more to the vernacular literature of the past and away from the study of classical forms.[14] But particular interest in Malory was slight, until 1816, when two separate editions appeared, both based on Stansby's version, to be followed a year later by Southey's edition of Caxton's text.[15]

It is probable that this renewed interest in the Morte Darthur was an expression of increased historical awareness which was refined as the nineteenth century wore on. But a more definite notion of history, while it accounted for differing values during previous ages, still served to alienate nineteenth-century readers of romance from

the spirit of the period during which these works were originally composed. The editions of 1816 and 1817 praised the Morte Darthur as an "extravagant fiction", drawing the line firmly between romance and history as between fiction and fact. The truth contained in both, as Caxton had recognized in his prologue, was by this time impossible to reconcile; man's respect for scientific truth had outstripped his trust in "doctryne" or moral truth, as exemplified in myth. A misreading of Caxton's prologue led to the following comment in the preface of the 1816 Walker and Edwards edition.

> It is remarkable that Caxton was at first very unwilling to print this work, because he doubted whether such a person as Arthur ever existed; and it is amusing to read the arguments by which he was persuaded of the existence of that noted monarch. The modern reader, however, need not be told, that the Arthur of history, and the Arthur of romance, are very different personages. Still, its merit, as a fiction, is very great. (16)

The definition of history as an analysis of documented facts reinforced earlier scholarly insistence on the accurate reproduction of texts, and extended this attitude to vernacular as well as classical literature. The Early English Text Society in England, and in France, the Société des anciens textes français, set standards of accuracy which disqualified many popular editions as corrupt and unreliable, both textually and historically.[17]

The progressive adaptation of the Morte Darthur, from Wynkyn to Stansby to the nineteenth-century popular editions was considered corruption of the first known, hence most historically important text--that of Caxton's 1485 edition. Although Southey's Morte Darthur of 1817 and Edward Strachey's "Globe" edition of 1868 were based on the Caxton text, Southey's inaccuracies and interpolations, and Strachey's

modernization "for ordinary readers...especially boys" were disparaged by scholars for their departure from the letter of the historical edition.[18]

Although H. Oskar Sommer was not editing Caxton's "original" text for the Early English Text Society, he was intent on satisfying the same editorial criteria. In the preface to his 1889 edition of the Morte Darthur, he claimed that he had made a "word for word, line for line, and page for page, and with some exceptions...[duly noted], letter for letter" copy.[19] In contrast to the popular editions which preceded and followed Sommer's (including the famous Dent edition of 1893 illustrated by Aubrey Beardsley), this 1889 edition of Caxton's text was the first scholarly treatment of the work. Instead of changes and interpolations within the text, there is an absolutely faithful reproduction of it, with all commentary and critical analysis relegated to notes and an introduction. This was the ideal, at least. Expanding on the humanist precedent, the scholarly editions of the last century attempted to situate their chosen texts in a continuum of history, noting sources and influences: it was a new return "ad fontes".

Vinaver, as author of the second and most recent scholarly edition of the Morte Darthur, has been concerned no less than Sommer to provide a historical and critical framework for his presentation of Malory. And although his editorial accuracy and judgment are superior to Sommer's, both of these editors show an absolute respect for the definitive text they present and elucidate. They support their choices of the Caxton and Winchester texts for the same historical reason--each represented the earliest version known, hence the closest to Malory's

own--while losing sight of the fact that it is they and not history itself which have set this criterion of selection. With their introductions, commentaries and editorial judgments, Sommer and Vinaver have no less than any "popular" editor of the Morte Darthur rationalized their inherited material to satisfy the values and tastes of their own age.

The concept of an authoritative text is not new; it was well known and accepted in the Middle Ages as it applied to the Bible and patristic writings, and a concern for accurate reproduction can be found even in the manuscript literature--Chaucer's "Wordes unto Adam, his Owne Scriveyn" are an example. But manuscript reproduction and the medieval habit of textual gloss as a mode of critical commentary resulted in altered, abbreviated or expanded versions of the works that were copied. In addition, the oral tradition preceding and associated with medieval vernacular literature meant that this literature remained fluid, popular and even more subject to change than scholarly works. Thus a work which has assumed the status of an authoritative text in the eyes of modern editors may well be an adaptation or translation of one or more earlier works.[20]

If we apply this notion to the Morte Darthur, it is evident that the "authoritative texts" of the Winchester MS and Caxton's edition, selected for their historical importance as much as for their textual merit, must be considered in their relation to other works. The Winchester MS is thought to be a version close to Malory's own, which in turn was a version of earlier French and English romances. Caxton's edition is a version of Malory's manuscript text; similarly, Wynkyn de Worde's two editions, Southey's text of 1817, and Sommer's 1889 edition

are versions of Caxton's version. Admittedly, printing slowed down the process of literary evolution in comparison with the medieval manuscript tradition, but it did not entirely stop it. The nature of the changes simply became less creative and more truly like corruptions and incrustations. The 1889 edition, for example, contains over one thousand typographical mistakes and variants, in spite of Sommer's claim that he had made an exact transcription.[21] The critical error made by scholars of medieval literature is to assume that editorial variants are corruptions and that the most historically prominent version of a medieval work can be regarded as having the same textual authority as a modern work reviewed and copyrighted by its author. The scholarly editors of Malory's work have attempted to see it, in Vinaver's words, "in the making". But in doing so, they have neglected an essential element of that making--the readiness and ability of medieval writers to build freely and creatively of the literary achievements of their predecessors and contemporaries. It is this long, slow movement of medieval literature which the concept of the scholarly edition obscures rather than illuminates.

Moreover, editions such as Sommer's and Vinaver's cannot avoid a compromise of three considerations, which are equally those of the popular editions and, as we have seen, of translation. These are textual fidelity, appeal to the contemporary reading public, and consideration of the "literariness" of a work.

In order to achieve a balance of these elements, popular editions of the Morte were adapted, just like translations, to appeal to contemporary readers, while textual fidelity was satisfied by the thinly disguised pretense of phrases such as "newly imprinted and corrected".

"newly refined", or "revised".[22] The scholarly editions have had to compromise also. Sommer reprinted Caxton, as he thought, "word for word...and page for page" because Caxton was of historical interest to his contemporaries following Blades' studies of his typography. And his investigation of the Morte Darthur's mythic origins reflected a contemporary enthusiasm for Celtic folklore and primitive myths of all kinds. Similarly, although Vinaver has also aimed at the presentation of an accurate, authoritative text, his edition is punctuated and paragraphed like a modern novel. His title, The Works of Sir Thomas Malory, interprets the relationship of the eight tales as that of the "oeuvre" of the modern novelist.[23] The scholarly editions of Sommer and Vinaver differ from the popular editions of Caxton, Stansby, and William Strachey not in kind, but in degree. All of these editors have had to balance the considerations of source, audience and style that, since Dolet, have also been the acknowledged aims of the translator.[24]

Caxton's and later editions do not represent automatic corruption of an "original text", best represented by the Winchester MS; instead, they should be seen as successive versions of a work which is itself a version of an earlier literary tradition. Viewed in this light, all of the forms of the Morte Darthur together represent the evolution of English prose from its origins in French and Burgundian culture. Tradition implies at once continuity and change, and the long history of Malory's work--its French sources, its successive editions, and also its influence on later English literature--points to the importance of translation, in terms of both language and form, as a vital element of literary creation.

NOTES

1. Caxton, prologue to the Morte Darthur, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 92-95.

2. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. 369, 155.

3. Malory, Le Morte Darthur, ed. H. Oskar Sommer, 4 vols. (London: David Nutt, 1889), I, 6-34; Lancelot del Lac, facsimile ed. Pickford, I, ff. 1v-3r. See Lot, Etude sur le Lancelot en prose, pp. 14-16, and Pickford, L'Evolution du roman arthurien en prose, pp. pp. 14-18.

4. Caxton, epilogue to the Morte Darthur, in Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, p. 1260, and in Malory, Le Morte Darthur, ed. Sommer, I, 861.

5. For example, MSS B. N. fr. 116,122,123,343; MS Arsenal 3480; MS B. M. Royal 19 C XIII. See Bogdanow, The Romance of the Grail, pp. 1-5.

6. Shaw, "Caxton and Malory", in Essays on Malory, ed. Bennett, pp. 114-115,127-145; Dichmann, "The Tale of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius: the rise of Lancelot", in Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, pp. 67-98.

7. Caxton, prologue to the Morte Darthur, in Prologues and Epilogues, ed. Crotch, pp. 94-95.

8. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. cxlvi-cxlvii.

9. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, p. cxvii.

10. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, pp. cxxvii-cxxxi. Cf. preface to Malory, The History of the Renowned Prince Arthur, King of Britain, 2 vols. (London: Walker and Edwards, 1816), I, vi; and Malory, Le Morte Darthur, ed. Sommer, I, vii.

11. Roger Ascham, The Scholemaster, in The English Works of Roger Ascham, ed. William Aldis Wright, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904), I, 231.

12. Malory, The booke of the noble Kyng Arthur some tyme kynge of Englonde (Westminster: Wynkyn de Worde, 1498), and The booke of the moost noble and worthy prince kyng. Kyng Arthur (Westminster: Wynkyn de Worde, 1529); The Story of the most noble and worthy Kynge Arthur (London: William Copland, 1557); The storye of the most noble and worthy Kynge Arthur (London: Thomas East, 1585).

13. Malory, The most ancient and famovs history of the renowned prince Arthur, King of Britaine (London: William Stansby for Jacob Bloome, 1634), preface.

14. Arthur Johnston, Enchanted Ground: a study of medieval romance in the eighteenth century (London: Athlone Press, 1964). Sir Walter Scott, Essays on Chivalry, Romance and Drama (London: Frederick Warne, n.d.), p. 106, notes that romances "fell into disrepute, although some of the more popular, sadly abridged and adulterated, continued to be publish in 'chap books', as they are called." Even so, he could recommend (p. 93) abridged and edited selections of medieval romance to the reader "who dreads the labour of winnowing out...valuable passages from the sterile chaff through which they are scattered." The objections of Ritson and twentieth-century scholars to this violation of textual integrity may be easily imagined. But Scott may well be closer to the spirit of medieval romance than those more fastidious of the letter.

15. Malory, La Mort D'Arthur (London: Haslewood, 1816); The History of the renowned Prince Arthur, King of Britain (London: Walker and Edwards, 1816); The byrth lyf and actes of Kyng Arthur, ed. Robert Southey (London: Longmans, 1817).

16. Malory, The History of the renowned Prince Arthur, King of Britain (Walker and Edwards), p. vii. See Collingwood, The Idea of History, pp. 76-88, 126-135.

17. Following the earlier, smaller Bannatyne and Roxburghe Clubs active in Scotland, the Early English Text Society was founded by F. J. Furnivall and published as its first numbers the Bath MS of Arthur (1864) and The Pearl/Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (1865). The Société des anciens textes français was established in 1875.

18. Malory, Morte Darthur...revised for modern use, ed. Edward Strachey (London: Globe, 1868). Cf. subsequent popular editions: The birth life and acts of King Arthur...now spelled in modern style, ed. John Rhys, illustrated by Aubrey Beardsley (London: Dent, 1893); King Arthur, ed. I. Gollanz (London: Dent, 1897); Selections from Sir Thomas Malory's Morte Darthur, ed. W. E. Mead (Boston: Ginn, 1897); Le Morte Darthur, modernized, ed. A. W. Pollard (New York: Macmillan, 1917); The Boy's King Arthur, ed. Sidney Lanier (New York: Scribners, 1917); Women of the Morte D'Arthur, ed. Ann D. Alexander (London: Methuen, 1927); The Morte Darthur...abridged ed. E. R. Sanders and C. E. Ward (New York: Crofts, 1940); King Arthur and his Knights: selected tales, ed. Eugène Vinaver (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1956), revised ed. (1968); Le Morte d'Arthur, modernized, ed. Keith Baines, with an introduction by Robert Graves (London: Harrap, 1963); Le Morte Darthur, Parts VII and VIII, ed. D. S. Brewer (London: Arnold, 1968). This list reflects a great deal of the cultural climate and literary tastes of the century from 1868 to 1968.

19. Malory, Le Morte Darthur, ed. Sommer, II, 17. Cf. R. B. McKerrow, An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), and Roger Laufer, Introduction à la textologie (Paris: Larousse, 1972).

20. Chaucer, "Wordes unto Adam, his Owne Sriveyn", in Complete Works, ed. Robinson, p. 534. See Zumthor, Essai de poétique médiévale, pp. 39-75; and Pickford, L'Evolution du roman arthurien en prose, pp. 129-213.

21. Malory, Works, ed. Vinaver, p. cxxxi: "No doubt the dimensions of the work, as any editor of Malory knows to his cost, make absolute accuracy humanly impossible; but the unfortunate thing about Sommer was that he belonged to that tradition of German scholarship which did not regard modesty as a virtue." This is the harshest comment on any critic than I have found in Vinaver's critical writing; his gentle and indirect rebuttal of the views expressed in Malory's Originality is found in A la recherche d'une poétique médiévale and The Rise of Romance.

22. Malory, Morte Darthur, ed. Copland (1557); East (1585); Stansby (1634); Wright (1856); Strachey (1868); Rhys (1893); Gollanz (1897); Pollard (1917); Baines (1963).

23. Brewer, "The Present Study of Malory", in Arthurian Romance, ed. Owen, pp. 94-96. See chapter VIII.

24. See chapter II.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. MEDIEVAL TEXTS

Aelfric, Lives of the Saints, ed. W. W. Skeat, EETS(OS) 76, London: Trubner, 1881.

Alfred, West Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care, ed. Henry Sweet, EETS(OS) 45, London: Trubner, 1871.

Augustine, De civitate Dei, ed. B. Dombart, 2 vols., Leipzig: Tubner, 1905.

Boccaccio, Giovanni, Decameron, tr. John Payne, Philadelphia: J. P. Horn, 1928.

Buchon, J. A. C. (ed.), Choix de chroniques et mémoires sur l'histoire de France: XVe siècle, Paris: Paul Daffis, 1876.

Caxton, William, The Book of Curtesye, ed. F. J. Furnivall, EETS(ES) 3, London: Oxford University Press, 1868.

----------, The Book of the Knight of the Tower, ed. M. Y. Offord, EETS(SS) 2, London: Oxford University Press, 1970.

----------, Charles the Grete, ed. S. J. Herritage, EETS(ES) 37, London: Trubner, 1880.

----------, Dialogues in French and English, ed. Henry Bradley, EETS (ES) 79, London: Oxford University Press, 1900

----------, Eneydos, ed. W. T. Culley and F. J. Furnivall, EETS(ES) 57, London: Trubner, 1890.

----------, The Four Sonnes of Aymon, ed. O. Richardson, EETS(ES) 44, 45, London: Trubner, 1885.

----------, The History of Jason (text), ed. John Munro, EETS(ES) 111, London: Oxford University Press, 1912.

----------, The Ordre of Chyualry, ed. A. T. P. Byles, EETS(OS) 168, London: Oxford University Press, 1926.

----------, Paris and Vienne, ed. MacEdward Leach, EETS(OS) 234, London: Oxford University Press, 1957.

----------, The Prologues and Epilogues, ed. J. W. B. Crotch, EETS(OS) 176, London: Oxford University Press, 1928.

Cely Papers, ed. H. E. Malden, London: Camden Society, 1900.

Les Cent nouvelles nouvelles, ed. F. P. Sweetser, Geneva: Droz, 1966.

Chaucer, Geoffrey, Complete Works, ed. F. N. Robinson, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957.

Chrétien de Troyes, Erec et Enide, ed. Mario Roques, Paris: Champion, 1952.

----------, Lancelot: le chevalier de la charrette, ed. Mario Roques, Paris: Champion, 1958.

----------, Perceval: le conte du Graal, ed. William Roach, Geneva: Droz/Paris: Minard, 1959.

----------, Yvain: le chevalier au lion, ed. Mario Roques, Paris: Champion, 1970.

Cuvelier, Chronique de Bertrand du Guesclin, ed. E. Charrière, Paris: Didot, 1839.

Erec: roman arthurien en prose, ed. C. E. Pickford, Geneva: Droz/Paris: Minard, 1959.

Faral, Edmond (ed.), Les Arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle, Paris: Champion, 1924.

La Folie Lancelot, ed. Fanni Bogdanow, Tübingen: Max Miemeyer, 1965.

Geoffrey of Vinsauf, Documentum de modo et arte dictandi et versificandi, ed./tr. Roger Parr, Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1968.

Gibbs, A. C. (ed.), Middle English Romances, London: Arnold, 1966.

Gonnot, Micheau, MS B.N. fr. 112 (1470), Paris: Bibliothèque nationale.

Gower, John, English Works, ed. G. C. Macaulay, EETS(ES) 81, London: Kegan Paul, 1900.

The Great Chronicle of London, ed. A. H. Thomas and I. D. Thornley, London: Royal Historical Society, 1938.

Higden, Ranulf, Polychronicon, ed. Churchill Babington, 9 vols., Rolls Series, London: Longmans, 1865-1886.

Lancelot del Lac, MS B. N. fr. 116 (fifteenth century), Paris: Bibliothèque nationale.

Lancelot del Lac, ed. Jehan and Gaillard LeBourgeois, and Jehan duPré (1488), facsimile ed. C. E. Pickford, Menston: Scolar Press reprint, 1973.

La Tour-Landry, Geoffrey de, Le Livre du Chevalier de la Tour-Landry pour l'enseignement de ses filles, ed. Anatole de Montaiglon, Paris: Jannet, 1854.

Malory, Sir Thomas, The booke of the noble Kyng Arthur some tyme kynge of Englonde, Westminster: Wynkyn de Worde, 1498.

----------, The booke of the moost noble and worthy prince kynge. Kyng Arthur, Westminster: Wynkyn de Worde, 1529.

----------, The story of the most noble and worth Kynge Arthur, London: William Copland, 1557.

----------, The storye of the most noble and worthy Kynge Arthur, London: Thomas East, 1585.

----------, The most ancient and famovs history of the renowned prince Arthur, King of Britaine, London: William Stansby for Jacob Bloome, 1634.

----------, The History of the Renowned Prince Arthur, King of Britain, 2 vols., London: Walker and Edwards, 1816.

----------, La Mort D'Arthur, London: Haslewood, 1816.

----------, The byrth lyf and actes of Kyng Arthur, ed. Robert Southey, London: Longmans, 1817.

----------, Morte Darthur...revised for modern use, ed. Edward Strachey, London: Globe, 1868.

----------, Le Morte Darthur, ed. H. Oskar Sommer, 4 vols., London: David Nutt, 1889.

----------, The birth life and acts of King Arthur...now spelled in modern style, ed. John Rhys, London: Dent, 1893.

----------, King Arthur, ed. I. Gollanz, London: Dent, 1897.

----------, Selections from the Morte Darthur, ed. W. E. Mead, Boston: Ginn, 1897.

----------, Le Morte Darthur, modernized, ed. A. W. Pollard, New York: Macmillan, 1917.

----------, The Boy's King Arthur, ed. Sidney Lanier, New York: Scribner's, 1917.

----------, Women of the Morte D'Arthur, ed. Ann D. Alexander, London: Methuen, 1927.

----------, The Morte Darthur, abridged, ed. E. R. Sanders and C. E. Ward, New York: Crofts, 1940.

----------, The Morte d'Arthur, modernized, ed. Keith Baines, London: Harrap, 1963.

----------, Works, ed. Eugène Vinaver, 3 vols. second ed., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967.

----------, King Arthur and his Knights: selected tales, ed. Eugène Vinaver, second ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968.

----------, Le Morte Darthur, Parts VII and VIII, ed. D. S. Brewer, London: Arnold, 1968.

Marguerite de Navarre, Heptaméron, ed. M. François, Paris: Garnier, 1967.

Merlin: roman en prose du XIIIe siècle (MS Huth), ed. Gaston Paris and Jacob Ulrich, 2 vols., Paris: Didot, 1886.

La Mort le roi Artu, ed. Jean Frappier, Geneva: Droz/Paris: Minard, 1956.

Le Morte Arthur, ed. Samuel B. Hemingway, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1912.

Morte Arthure, ed. John Finlayson, London: Arnold, 1957.

Paston Letters, ed. John Gairdner, 4 vols., Edinburgh: John Grant, 1910.

Pecocke, Reginald, The Folewer to the Donet, ed. Elsie Vaughn Hitchcock, EETS(OS) 164, London: Oxford University Press, 1924.

Perlesvaus: le haut livre du Graal, ed. William A. Nitze and T. A. Jenkins, New York: Phaeton Press, 1972.

Pollard, A. W. (ed.), Fifteenth-century Prose and Verse, New York: Dutton, n.d.

Prose Merlin, ed. Henry B. Wheatley, 2 vols. EETS(OS) 10,21,36,112, London: Kegan Paul, 1899.

Les .XV. Joies de mariage, ed. Jean Rychner, Geneva: Droz/Paris: Minard, 1967.

Le Roman du Chastelain de Couci, ed. J. E. Matzke and M. Delbouille, Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1936.

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, ed. J. R. R. Tolkien and E. V. Gordon, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925.

Stonor Letters and Papers, ed. C. L. Kingsford, 2 vols., London: Camden Society, 1910.

Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances, ed. H. Oskar Sommer, 8 vols. Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1908-1916.

B. MEDIEVAL HISTORY AND CRITICISM

Adamson, J. W., "The Extent of Literacy in England in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries", The Library (fourth series) X (1929), 163-193.

Ascham, Roger, English Works, ed. William Aldis Wright, 2 vols., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904.

Atkins, J. W. H., English Literary Criticism: the medieval phase, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943.

Aurner, N. S., Caxton: mirrour of fifteenth-century letters, 1926: New York: Russell and Russell, 1965.

Baldwin, C. S., Medieval Rhetoric and Poetics to 1400, 1928: Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith reprint, 1959.

Baltzell, Jane, "Rhetorical 'Amplification' and 'Abbreviation' and the Structure of Medieval Narrative", Pacific Coast Philology II (1967), 32-39.

Barrois, Jean (ed.), Bibliothèque prototypographique, ou Librairies des fils du roi Jean, Paris: Treuffel and Wurtz, 1830.

Beer, Gillian, The Romance, London: Methuen, 1970.

Bell, H. E., "The Price of Books in Medieval England", The Library (fourth series) XVII (1937), 312-332.

Bennett, H. S., "The Author and his Public in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries", Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association XXIII (1938), 7-24.

----------, "Caxton and his Reading Public", Review of English Studies XIX (1943), 113-119.

----------, English Books and Readers 1475-1557, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952.

----------, "Fifteenth-century Secular Prose", Review of English Studies XXI (1945), 257-263.

----------, "The Production and Dissemination of Vernacular Manuscripts in the Fifteenth Century", The Library (fifth series) I (1947), 167-178.

Bennett, J. A. W., Essays on Malory, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.

Bezzola, R., Le Sens de l'aventure et de l'amour: Chrétien de Troyes, Paris: La Jeune Parque, 1947.

Blades, William, Biography and Typography of William Caxton, second ed., London: Trubner, 1882.

----------, Life and Typography of William Caxton, 2 vols., 1861: New York: Burt Franklin reprint, n.d.

Blake, N. F., Caxton and his World, London: Deutsch, 1969.

----------, "Investigations into the Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton", John Rylands Library Bulletin XLIX (1966), 17-46.

----------, "The Vocabulary of French and English Printed by William Caxton", English Language Notes III (1966), 7-15.

----------, "William Caxton: his choice of texts", Anglia LXXXIII (1965), 289-307.

----------, "Word Borrowing in Caxton's Original Writings", English Language Notes VI (1968), 87-90.

Bogdanow, Fanni, The Romance of the Grail, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1966.

Brewer, D. S., Chaucer and Chaucerians, Edinburgh: Nelson, 1966.

Burrow, J. A., Ricardian Poetry, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971.

Byles, A. T. P., "William Caxton as a Man of Letters", The Library (fourth series) XV (1934), 1-25.

Chambers, E. K.,"Sir Thomas Malory", Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association, London: English Association, 1971.

Chambers, R. W., On the Continuity of English Prose, EETS(OS) 186a, 1932: London: Oxford University Press, 1957.

----------, and M. Daunt (eds.), A Book of London English 1384-1425, London: Oxford University Press, 1931.

Chaytor, H. J., From Script to Print, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1945.

Clair, Colin, A History of Printing in Britain, London: Cassell, 1965.

Coleridge, T. S., Miscellaneous Criticism, ed. T. M. Raysor, London: Constable, 1936.

Conley, C. H., The First English Translations of the Classics, 1927: Port Washington, N. Y.: Kennikat Press, 1967.

Cottle, Basil, The Triumph of English 1350-1400, London: Blandford Press, 1969.

Cummings, H. M., The Indebtedness of Chaucer's Works to the Italian Works of Boccaccio, 1916: Haskell House reprint, 1965.

Curtius, E. R., European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, tr. Willard Trask, New York: Harper and Row, 1953.

Davis, Norman, "Styles in English Prose of the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Period", Langue et littérature XXI (1961), 165-184.

Dean, Ruth, "What is Anglo-Norman?", Annuale mediaevale VI (1965), 29-46.

De Ricci, Seymour, A Census of Caxtons, Oxford: Bibliographical Society, 1909.

Doutrepont, Georges, La Littérature française à la cour des ducs de Bourgogne, 1909: Geneva: Slatkine reprint, 1970.

----------, Les Mises en prose des épopées et des romans chevaleresques, du XIVe au XVIe siècle, 1939: Geneva: Slatkine reprint, 1969.

Duby, Georges, and R. Mandrou, Histoire de la civilisation française, 2 vols., Paris: Armand Colin, 1958.

Duff, E. Gordon, William Caxton, Chicago: Caxton Club, 1905.

Dufournet, Jean, "Art et déformation historique dans les Mémoires de Philippe de Commynes", Romania XC (1969), 145-173.

Edel, Leon (ed.), Literary History and Literary Criticism, New York: International Federation of Languages and Literatures, 1964.

Febvre, Lucien, and Henri-Jean Martin, L'Apparition du livre, Paris: Albin Michel, 1971.

Ferguson, Arthur B., The Indian Summer of English Chivalry, Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1960.

Ferrier, Janet, French Prose Writers of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, Oxford: Pergamon, 1966.

Field, P. J. C., "Description and Narration in Malory", Speculum XLIII (1968), 476-486.

----------, Romance and Chronicle: a study of Malory's prose style, London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1971.

Foulet, Lucien, Le Roman de Renart, Paris: Champion, 1914.

Fowler, Kenneth, The Age of Plantagenet and Valois, London: Elek, 1967.

Frappier, Jean, Etude sur la Mort le roi Artu, second ed., Geneva: Droz/Paris: Minard, 1961.

----------, Etude sur Yvain, Paris: Edition d'enseignement supérieur, 1969.

----------, "Sur un remaniement de la Mort Artu dans un manuscrit du XIVe siècle: le Palatinus latinus 1967", Romania LVII (1931), 214-222.

Gabriel, Astrick L. "Les Etudiants étrangers à l'Université de Paris au XVe siècle", Annales de l'Université de Paris XXIX (1959), 377-400.

Gathercole, Patricia, "Fifteenth-century Translation: the development of Laurent de Premierfait", Modern Language Quarterly XXI (1960), 365-370.

Goldschmidt, E. P., Medieval Texts and their First Appearance in Print, London: Bibliographical Society, 1943.

Gordon, Ian A., The Movement of English Prose, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966.

Hardison, O. B., Jr., English Literary Criticism: the Renaissance, New York: Appleton Century Crofts, 1963.

Hauser, Arnold, A Social History of Art, 4 vols., New York: Vintage, 1951.

Hay, Denys, Europe in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, London: Longmans, 1966.

Herrick, M. T., The Poetics of Aristotle in England, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930.

Hirsch, Rudolf, Printing, Selling, Reading, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1967.

Holmes, Urban Tigner, Jr., Chrétien de Troyes, New York: Twayne, 1970.

----------, A History of Old French Literature, revised ed., New York: Russell and Russell, 1962.

Holzknecht, Karl Julius, Literary Patronage in the Middle Ages, 1923: New York: Octagon Press reprint, 1966.

Huizinga, Johan, The Waning of the Middle Ages, 1924: New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1954.

Jacob, E. F., The Fifteenth Century 1399-1485, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961.

----------, "Florida verborum venustas", John Rylands Library Bulletin XVII (1933), 264-290.

Johnston, Arthur, Enchanted Ground: a study of medieval romance in the eighteenth century, London: Athlone Press, 1964.

Kekewich, Margaret, "Edward IV, William Caxton, and Literary Patronage in Yorkist England", Modern Language Review LXVI (1971), 481-487.

Kelso, Ruth, The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century, 1929: Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith reprint, 1964.

Kendall, Paul Murray, Richard the Third, London: Allen and Unwin, 1955.

----------, The Yorkist Age, London: Allen and Unwin, 1962.

Kennedy, Edward D., "Malory's Use of Hardyng's Chronicle", Notes and Queries CCXIV (1969), 167-170.

Ker, W. P., Medieval English Literature, 1912: London: Oxford University Press, 1962.

Kilgour, R. L., The Decline of Chivalry as Shown in the French Literature of the Late Middle Ages, 1937: Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith reprint, 1966.

Kingsford, C. L., English Historical Literature, 1913: New York: Burt Franklin reprint, 1962.

Knowles, David, The Evolution of Medieval Thought, Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1962.

Kukenheim, L., and Henri Roussel, Guide de la littérature française, Leiden: Leiden University Press, 1963.

Lambley, K., The Teaching and Cultivation of the French Language... During Tudor and Stuart Times, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1920.

Lander, J. R., The Wars of the Roses, New York: Putnam, 1966.

Lathrop, H. B., "The First English Printers and their Patrons", The Library (fourth series) III (1923), 69-96.

Leach, A. F., The Schools of Medieval England, London: Methuen, 1915.

LeGentil, Pierre, La Littérature française du moyen âge, Paris: Colin, 1963.

----------, "Réflexions sur la création littéraire au moyen âge", Cultura neolatina XX (1960), 129-140.

Legge, M. Dominica, Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.

Lesure, François (ed.), La Renaissance dans les provinces du nord, Paris: Centre de la recherche scientifique, 1956.

Lewis, C. S., English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, excluding Drama, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954.

Loomis, Roger Sherman (ed.), Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959.

Lot, Ferdinand, Etude sur le Lancelot en prose, Paris: Champion, 1918.

Lumiansky, R. M.(ed.), Malory's Originality: a critical study of Le Morte Darthur, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964.

McKeon, R., "Rhetoric in the Middle Ages", Speculum XVII (1942), 1-32.

McMahon, Clara, Education in Fifteenth-century England, New York: Greenwood Press, 1958.

Mandel, Jerome, and Bruce A. Rosenberg (eds.), Medieval Literature and Folklore Studies: essays in honour of Francis Lee Utley, New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 1970.

Matthews, William, The Ill-Framed Knight, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966.

----------, Later Medieval English Prose, New York: Appleton Century Crofts, 1963.

---------- (ed.), Medieval Secular Literature: four essays, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965.

Mehl, Dieter, The Middle English Romances of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968.

Miko, S. J., "Malory and the Chivalric Order", Medium Aevum XXXV (1966), 211-230.

Moorman, Charles, The Book of Kyng Arthur: the unity of Malory's Morte Darthur, Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1965.

----------,A Knyght There Was: the evolution of the knight in literature, Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967.

Morgan, M. M., "A Treatise in Cadence", Modern Language Review XLVII (1952), 156-164.

Murphy, James J., "A Fifteenth-century Treatise on Prose Style", Newberry Library Bulletin VI (1966), 205-210.

Muscatine, Charles, Chaucer and the French Tradition, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957.

Myers, A. R., England in the Late Middle Ages 1307-1536, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963.

Nykrog, P., Les Fabliaux: étude d'histoire littéraire et de stylistique médiévale, Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1957.

Owen, D. R. R. (ed.), Arthurian Romance, Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1970.

Owst, G. R., Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933.

Paulphilet, Albert, Le Legs du moyen âge, Melun: D'Argences, 1950.

Pickering, F. P., Literature and Art in the Middle Ages, London: Macmillan, 1970.

Pickford, C. E., L'Evolution du roman arthurien en prose, Paris: Nizet, 1959.

Plant, Marjorie, The English Book Trade, second ed., London: Allen and Unwin, 1956.

Plomer, H. R., William Caxton 1424-1491, London: Parsons, 1925.

Poole, Austin Lane (ed.), Medieval England, 2 vols., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958.

Pope, Mildred, From Latin to Modern French, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1934.

Poulet, Georges, Les Métamorphoses du cercle, Paris: Plon, 1961.

Prins, A. A., French Influence in English Phrasing, Leiden: Leiden University Press, 1952.

Renwick, W. L., and H. Orton, The Beginnings of English Literature, London: Cresset Press, 1952.

Robertson, D. W., Jr., A Preface to Chaucer, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962.

Robinson, Ian, Chaucer and the English Tradition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.

----------, Chaucer's Prosody: a study of the Middle English verse tradition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Rothwell, W., "The Teaching of French in Medieval England", Modern Language Review LXIII (1968), 37-46.

Rychner, Jean, L'Articulation des phrases narratives dans La Mort Artu, Geneva: Droz, 1970.

Ryding, William W., Structure in Medieval Narrative, The Hague: Mouton, 1971.

Sayles, G. O., The Medieval Foundations of England, New York: Barnes, 1961.

Schofield, Cora L., The Life and Reign of Edward IV, 2 vols., New York: Frank Cass, 1967.

Scott, Sir Walter, Essays on Chivalry, Romance and Drama, London: Frederick Warne, n.d.

Scudder, Vida L., Le Morte Darthur of Thomas Malory: a study of the book and its sources, 1921: New York: Haskell House reprint, 1965.

Sonnino, Lee A., A Handbook to Sixteenth-century Rhetoric, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968.

Southern, R.W., The Making of the Middle Ages, London: Grey Arrow, 1959.

Steinberg, S. H., Five Hundred Years of Printing, revised ed., London: Faber and Faber, 1959.

Stevens, J. E., Medieval Romance: themes and approaches, London: Hutchinson University Library, 1973.

Stewart, G. R., "English Geography in Malory's Morte Darthur", Modern Language Review XXX (1935), 204-209.

Stubbs, W., Historical Introductions to the Rolls Series, London: Hassall, 1902.

Suggett, Helen, "The Use of French in the Later Middle Ages", Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (fourth series) XXVIII (1946), 61-83.

Sutherland, James, On English Prose, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957.

Thrupp, Sylvia L., The Merchant Class of Medieval London 1300-1500, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1948.

Tucker, P. E., "The Place of the Quest of the Holy Grail in the Morte Darthur", Modern Language Review XLVIII (1953), 391-397.

----------, "A Source for the Healing of Sir Urry in the Morte Darthur", Modern Language Review L (1955), 490-492.

Vasta, Edward (ed.), Middle English Survey: critical essays, Notre Dame, Ind.: Notre Dame University Press, 1965.

Vaughan, R., Philip the Bold: the formation of the Burgundian state, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962.

Vinaver, Eugène, A la recherche d'une poétique médiévale, Paris: Nizet, 1970.

----------, Malory, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929.

----------, "Malory's Morte Darthur in the Light of a Recent Discovery", John Rylands Library Bulletin XIX (1935), 438-457.

----------, The Rise of Romance, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.

----------, Le Roman de Tristan dans l'oeuvre de Thomas Malory, Paris: Champion, 1925.

Vising, Johan, Anglo-Norman Language and Literature, London: Oxford University Press, 1923.

Wells, J. E. (ed.), A Manual of Writings in Middle English 1050-1400, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1926.

Williams, Elizabeth, "Lanval and Sir Landevale: a medieval translator and his methods", Leeds Studies in English (new series) III (1970), 85-99.

Wilson, R. H., "More Borrowings by Malory from Hardyng's Chronicle", Notes and Queries CCXV (1970), 208-210.

----------, "Notes on Malory's Sources", Modern Language Notes LXVI (1951), 22-26.

Wilson, R. M., The Lost Literature of Medieval England, London: Methuen, 1952.

Wimsatt, James, Chaucer and the French Love Poets, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1968.

Workman, Samuel K., Fifteenth-century Translation as an Influence on English Prose, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940.

Zeeman, Elizabeth, "Continuity in Middle English Devotional Prose", Journal of English and Germanic Philology LV (1956), 417-422.

Zumthor, Paul, Essai de poétique médiévale, Paris: Seuil, 1962.

----------, Histoire littéraire de la France médiévale, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1954.

C. THEORY OF TRANSLATION AND GENERAL REFERENCES

Anouilh, Jean, Antigone, Paris: Table Ronde, 1946.

Amos, Flora Ross, Early Theories of Translation, New York: Columbia University Press, 1920.

Aristotle, Poetics, ed. Francis Fergusson, tr. S. H. Butler, New York: Hill and Wang, 1961.

Arnold, Matthew, Selected Essays, ed. Noel Annan, London: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Arrowsmith, William, and Roger Shattuck (eds.), The Craft and Context of Translation, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961.

Auerbach, Erich, Mimesis: the representation of reality in western literature, tr. Willard R. Trask, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963.

Baugh, Albert C., A History of the English Language, New York: Appleton Century Crofts, 1935.

Bonnerot, Louis (ed.), Les Chemins de la traduction, Paris: Didier, 1963.

Booth, A. D. (ed.), Aspects of Translation, London: Secker and Warburg, 1958.

---------- (ed.), Machine Translation, Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1967.

Brower, Reuben A. (ed.), On Translation, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959.

Carr, E. H., What is History?, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961.

Cary, Edmond, Les Grands traducteurs français, Geneva: Georg, 1963.

Catford, J. C., A Linguistic Theory of Translation: an essay in applied linguistics, London: Oxford University Press, 1965.

Collingwood, R. G., The Idea of History, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946.

Delavenay, Emile, An Introduction to Machine Translation, tr. Emile and Katherine Delavenay, New York: Praeger, 1960.

Dryden, John, Works, ed. Sir Walter Scott, 18 vols., Edinburgh: Constable, 1821.

Eliot, T. S., The Sacred Wood: essays on poetry and criticism, seventh ed., London: Methuen, 1950.

----------, Selected Essays, third ed., London: Faber and Faber, 1951.

François, Alexis, Histoire de la langue française cultivée, 2 vols. Geneva: Jullian, 1959.

Frye, Northrop, Anatomy of Criticism, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.

Garvin, Paul, On Machine Translation, The Hague: Mouton, 1972.

Highet, Gilbert, The Classical Tradition: Greek and Roman influences on western literature, London: Oxford University Press, 1967.

Houdar de la Motte, Antoine, Oeuvres complètes, 2 vols., 1754: Geneva: Slatkine reprint, 1970.

Jesperson, Otto, The Growth and Structure of the English Language, 1938: Oxford: Blackwell, 1962.

Larbaud, Valery, Sous l'invocation de Saint-Jérôme, Paris: Gallimard, 1946.

Laufer, Roger, Introduction à la textologie, Paris: Larousse, 1972.

LeBidois, R., "La Traduction: art ou technique?", Le Monde, 11 March, 1959.

Lovejoy, Arthur, The Great Chain of Being, 1936: New York: Harper and Row, 1960.

McKerrow, R. B., An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students, London: Oxford University Press, 1927.

Matthiessen, Francis O., Translation: an Elizabethan art, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1931.

Mounin, Georges, Les Problèmes théoriques de la traduction, Paris: Gallimard, 1963.

Nizt, John, A Structural History of English, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1966.

Panofsky, Erwin, Meaning in the Visual Arts, New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1975.

Pope, Alexander (tr.), The Iliad, ed. Reuben A. Brower and W. H. Bond, New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Savory, T. H., The Art of Translation, London: Jonathan Cape, 1957.

Scholes, Robert, and Robert Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative, New York: Oxford University Press, 1966.

Sewell, Richard B., The Tragic Vision, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959.

Shelley, Percy Bysshe, Complete Works, ed. Roger Ingpen and Walter E. Peck, 10 vols., London: Benn, 1965.

----------, Poetical Works, ed. Thomas Hutchinson, London: Oxford University Press, 1945.

Steiner, George, After Babel, London: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Symons, Arthur, The Symbolist Movement in Literature, London: Heinemann, 1899.

Zitner, S. P. (ed.), The Practice of Modern Literary Scholarship, Glenview, Ill.: Scott and Foresman, 1966.

Zuber, Roger, Les "Belles infidèles" et la formation du goût classique, Paris: Armand Colin, 1968.